The Menace of Secularism.

Hon. Mrs. Bell.

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THE MENACE OF SECULARISM

ADDRESSES ON THE NATION'S NEED OF THE NATIONAL CHURCH

BY

THE HON. MRS. GELL

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TO

THE CHURCHWOMEN OF WALES,

IN TOKEN OF SYMPATHY AND SUPPORT,

AND TO

OUR FELLOW-WORKERS,

PLEDGED TO RESIST THE

MENACE OF SECULARISM,

IN APPRECIATIVE RECOGNITION OF THEIR

UNTIRING DEVOTION,

THIS BOOKLET IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED BY

THE AUTHOR.

Morton Hall,
July 25, 1912.

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PREFACE

LIBRARY SETS

THIS course of addresses is published in response to a request from those who attended them. They desired to pass on to others the information they had themselves received, and as many of the classes and meetings they had in mind are held for those who have few opportunities of study, the attempt has been made by the author to put the salient points as regards the great issues at stake as simply as possible. It appeared undesirable to burden the addresses with dry statistics; the object being so to stimulate interest that the audience will pursue the subject for themselves.

It is earnestly hoped that those who use the addresses will deliver them, if possible, in their own words, explaining and illustrating when necessary. Further information may be obtained from the books and booklets recommended for each section at the end of the volume. The writer is greatly indebted to their authors for much of the material utilised.

DEC 16 1940

Experience proves that the future of the Church is a question which excites the deepest interest in audiences of every description—educated and uneducated alike. In a single meeting it is impossible to do more than touch the fringe of the subject. In a course the hearers gathering week by week gradually realise all that the National Church means to the National Life. It is found that the attendance, far from diminishing, generally increases with each meeting of the series; for it is felt that the problem before us is one in which every baptized member of the Church has individual responsibility.

The issue is no matter of party politics, nor is it a question between Church and Chapel. It is not too much to say that the very soul of the nation is at stake; for in face of the onslaught of materialism and secularism we cannot afford to allow any force which makes for righteousness to be weakened or crippled. Pre-eminent among such forces is our own National Church, and to secure that the womanhood of England is aroused ere it is too late to the gravity of the situation is the object of this little volume. Knowledge, courage, faith, intercession—these are our safeguards. Armed with these, to us too will surely come the inspiring word, "O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt."

HARDING

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I

The Church and the Nation

ORIGIN—INFLUENCE—DEVELOPMENT
OUTLINE OF THE BILL
WHY ARE WE ATTACKED?

Prayer

FOR THOSE IN ERROR

Almighty GOD, *who shewest to them that be in error the light of Thy truth, to the intent that they may return into the way of righteousness; Grant unto all them that are admitted into the fellowship of* CHRIST'S *Religion, that they may eschew those things that are contrary to their profession, and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same; through our* LORD JESUS CHRIST.

I

The Church and the Nation

The day of decision has come. We are face to face with the greatest crisis which has menaced the Church since Cromwellian troopers preached from the pulpits of our fanes, and, as at the sack of Lichfield, chased a cat through the noble aisles and christened a calf in the font in ribald mockery of the sacred baptismal rite. And now once more the battle is set. The Church of our Fathers is the object of an attack in which certain leaders of other Christian bodies are joining forces with those who are avowedly antagonistic, not merely to the Church, but to all which the mass of Christians hold sacred—who, in a word, desire to materialise and secularise the whole gamut of human life.

The time has come to have done with subterfuge—to sweep aside specious arguments about the spirituality of the Church being unaffected by its material prosperity—as though it had not been a cardinal principle of the primitive Church that they who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel; or as though our Blessed Lord Himself had not vouchsafed to be dependent upon the common sustenance of His fellow-men for the maintenance of His Sacred Body. That which is spiritual, it is true, will survive the worst malice of evil machinations; but the problem for us, the sons and daughters of the Church, is this: "Dare we sit calmly by while the means by which her spiritual influence is maintained are wrested from the Church in Wales?" Unless we strive for the Truth to the death, will not our descendants point at us the finger of scorn as the generation who were false to their trust, false

to their traditions, false to the long line of ancestors who, through evil report and good report, through persecution, through loss of worldly goods, yet handed on their sacred heritage unimpaired, nay, illumined, glorified by centuries of self-sacrifice? And if through criminal indolence and supineness we permit this stupendous wrong to take effect, will not the bitter curse of Meroz fall on our shame-stricken heads: "Curse ye, Meroz, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD against the mighty"?

It is because of the gravity of the crisis, because on the womanhood of England the future of religion in our country largely depends, that we desire to ponder carefully the subject of our Church in its relation to the past, to the present, and to the National life and character in the unknown future.

For this is no matter of party politics, nor is it a question between Church and chapel. It is a question between the forces of good and the forces of evil, between religion and irreligion, between the things of the soul and the things of the body. Yes, it is not too much to say the very soul of the nation is at stake.

The subject is too great to be dealt with in a few words. It has taken many hundreds of years to build up the Church which it is sought to cripple in a few short weeks, and if we are to understand the question, it is our solemn duty to be ready to give study and thought to the subject. There is still time to avert overwhelming disaster if every woman who cares for the knowledge of GOD, for the ministrations of her Church, for the training of her children in the wonderful love of CHRIST, will think out what it would mean to be without a resident clergyman, without regular services, without all the beautiful, helpful activities which centre round the vicarage; and then will use the influence which GOD has given to the very humblest among us to prevent our country from consenting to a crime which will lie like a black blot on our day and generation. We remember the outcry about a shortage of bread at the time of a recent Strike. What we have to fear

for our beloved country is a famine such as Amos describes —"a famine in the land, not a famine of bread or a thirst for water—but of hearing the Word of the LORD."

To many of us the sense that at last we can do something for our Church comes fraught with inspiration. For how much we owe her! All through our lives she has stood by us at the great moments of existence, from our earliest childhood, when at the Font we were received into her loving arms and became members of the glorious Family of CHRIST. Then, as we entered on womanhood, with all its problems, Confirmation brought the special strength for the special need. Again, when the new home was to be created, girlhood left behind, and the responsibilities of wifehood and motherhood assumed, the most human of relations was consecrated and ennobled by GOD'S blessing, and we dared to take the life-long vow of love and faithfulness because we knew that GOD had sent forth strength for us. And once more, when some heart-breaking sorrow was laid upon us—when we stood by the grave of one dearer than life itself—our Church supported the passing soul, and gave to us the survivors courage to face life again in sure and certain hope of reunion in Heaven.

Is it too much to ask that we who have known these things should resolve that, so far as we are concerned, we will not suffer those who come after us to be bereft of a priceless blessing; but that we will know ourselves, and help others to realise what is contemplated before it is too late?

The first point in our subject is the Origin of the Church. The beginnings of things have always a special interest. No place is ever quite the same as the home of our childhood, and how we cherish all the little belongings of our own babes which tell how year by year the child-life developed! It is wonderful indeed that we should be able to look back across the centuries for 1900 years and say with absolute certainty that the origin of our Church—our National Church—the Church in Wales, as the Church in England—was our Blessed LORD Himself—CHRIST the Head of the Church. The story of its foundation is told

in the Gospels, in the Acts, and in the writings of the Apostles. To the early Christians it was just as real as it is to us. In the first century, as in the nineteenth, the ideal placed before her children was identical: "Seek that ye may excel to the edifying (building up) of the Church." So from that small country of the Jews went forth the Power which was to spread through all the nations of the earth, and to bring to one country after the other the joy of goodness; hope in place of despair; and for hatred and self-seeking, love and brotherhood, through the knowledge of JESUS CHRIST.

We cannot actually fix the date when this knowledge first came to our island. But one of the early Christian writers, Tertullian, tells us of Christianity in Britain about the year 208, and from other historians we learn that in the previous century there were some Christians in this country. In our next chapter we shall have a fuller account of how the Church came to us, and hear much about the early history of the Welsh Dioceses which it is sought to cut off from ourselves.

But some may ask, "What has been the *influence* of the Church in Wales? Is it worth preserving? Has it been for good? Would anyone be the worse for its loss?" Let us look at a few of the benefits which the State owes to the Church. First, *Unity*. The Church in very early days welded into one the severed provinces of Wales, and joined Welsh Church-people with their fellow-Churchmen in England for spiritual work under the Archbishop of Canterbury. Their creed and ours was the same, "I believe one Catholic and Apostolic Church," and in days when Britain was still divided into warring kingdoms, religion prepared the way for the mighty Empire of which we are so justly proud.

Then the Church was the great *Almsgiver*. It is only within recent times that the State has cared for the poor. The Church set the example, and many holy men and women devoted their whole lives to relieving those who were in want, to nursing the sick and wounded, and caring for the aged and infirm, for the sake of Him who said, "I was sick, and ye visited Me."

The Church was the great *Teacher*. There were no provided and secondary schools, no colleges or evening classes, except such as were carried on by the clergy, and the education they gave was true education, for while it prepared young people to be useful citizens, it was based on the only sure foundation, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy is understanding."

The Church was the *Preserver of the Faith* in wild and lawless times, when but for that sacred Body men would have forgotten how to worship GOD, and would have been completely given over to their own evil passions.

Above all, *the Church gave the people of Wales the Bible* in their own language. Imagine what our services would be like if prayers and psalms and lessons were all read in a foreign language. Do we realise that this is what went on for centuries, until Queen Elizabeth ordered the Bible to be translated out of the ancient tongue into Welsh, so that all who went to church might hear the Word of GOD and understand it? This translation was made by Bishop William Morgan of St. Asaph, under very great difficulties, for there were no capable printers nearer than London at that time, and the compositors did not know Welsh. So the Bishop had to be absent from Wales for a whole year. No money was provided for his expenses or for the cost of the printing; he found it himself, with the result that when he died he had only 4s. 8d. in his purse, and all his furniture and belongings were valued at a little over £100.

Twenty years earlier the New Testament had been imperfectly translated, and as a result during that time the first lesson was read in Latin, the second in Welsh.

But, it may be objected, "These benefits, many of them, took place hundreds of years ago. What of the present time?" In this section we can only glance at this side of the subject, leaving the full account for Chaps. IV. and V. of the series. It is enough to say here that even candid opponents admit that the Church in Wales is doing splendid work among rich and poor alike, and English

Church-people are humiliated to think that the Dioceses in Wales, though they are among the poorest, yet compare most favourably with some of our richest Dioceses in England as regards the number of their communicants and the liberality of their subscriptions.

These beneficent activities are acknowledged by friend and foe. How does the Bill before Parliament propose to deal with the means which have rendered the work of the Church possible?

The funds at the disposition of the Church in Wales from endowments and from grants made by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and Queen Anne's Bounty amount to some £270,000 a year. This sum is quite inadequate to carry out the necessary work, and it is only by the generous contributions of rich and poor alike among the Church-people of Wales that a vigorous spiritual life is now maintained. The stipends of the clergy average under £200 a year, and it is strange indeed that men should be found capable one session of voting to themselves salaries of £400 a year in order that they may at their ease the following session concert measures for depriving the Welsh clergy of the future of the slender pittance at present assured to them. Of this sum of £270,000 given by our forefathers to the service of GOD, the Bill of 1912 diverts two-thirds, or 13s. 4d. in every pound, to secular purposes. As regards the remaining third, only £20,000 is derived from existing parochial endowments; and about £60,000 is dependent upon grants from Queen Anne's Bounty and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. This means that on the death of the present incumbent parish after parish would have to face the question of how a new clergyman can be maintained. It is difficult to understand how anyone professing to care for the needs of the wage-earners and those with slender incomes can contemplate such a position without sorrow and indignation. Hitherto the consolations of our holy religion have been within the reach of the humblest and poorest. No one has been deprived of the spiritual help which alone makes this life tolerable and prepares for Heaven, because of his

poverty. For all, the lowest as the highest, the Gospel of our LORD JESUS CHRIST has been ministered "without money and without price." But should this disastrous Bill become law all this will be changed. To the rich personally the loss will be small; they can supply the necessary stipend which shall secure the services of a Godly priest. It is on the poor that the matter will press so hardly. They must forego (in too many instances) what they have hitherto enjoyed free of charge, their children must miss the hallowing influences of regular services and the numberless beneficent activities which centre round the vicarage home in their midst; or from their hard-earned wages they must themselves find the necessary funds to enable the clergyman to keep body and soul together.

This is no fancy picture. In a later section we shall consider in detail how matters would stand. But it is well to remember that if our own clergy were largely withdrawn, in nearly half the parishes of Wales there would be no *resident* minister of religion at all, neither a Wesleyan, a Congregationalist, a Baptist, nor any man specially set apart for the service of GOD, whose one aim it is to keep alive the knowledge of the Most High, and to lift men's thoughts above the sordid cares of this workaday world. How can anyone maintain that such a condition of affairs could promote the truest welfare of our people; or could build up the sterling character for which Britons are famous far and wide?

And what of our cathedrals in Wales, with their Dean and Chapter, their Minor Canons, and the Vicars Choral, to whom the beautiful services owe so much? These corporations which have been a centre for the whole countryside, and have continued for many centuries, are to be dissolved. The whole of the ancient endowments belonging to them are to be taken away and given to colleges, libraries, and museums. It is nothing to the promoters of the Bill that to the music-loving Welsh people the stately services of the cathedrals have come with special appeal; nor are they moved by all the

hallowed memories which are embodied in these monuments of a nation's faith. The fiat has gone forth. The cathedral corporations are to be dissolved.

And then, as regards the documents — those ancient deeds which have been the treasured possessions of little parishes and churches up and down the country, as well as of the more dignified town edifices, from time immemorial, and are full of local history and interest—these are to be taken from their owners and handed over to the three Welsh Commissioners appointed to deal with the Church's possessions, to be transferred to the County Councils. No information is given as to the qualifications of these Commissioners. Their powers are very large, but they need not apparently be Churchmen, nor even Christians; yet they are to receive large salaries out of the Church's funds to enable them to execute their shameful task with ease.

The burial-grounds and churchyards, which for the sake of the blessed dead are hardly less sacred to us than the Church itself, are to be taken out of the care of the parish priest, and given over to a secular body; though it is enacted (surely with unconscious irony) that the parishioners and clergy are still to have a right of way through their own churchyard to the Parish Church! GOD's acre will henceforward be *Council* acre.

Further particulars as regards Disendowment will be given later on. Of Disestablishment also in this section we will only add that it seeks to sever, so far as the State can do it, a Church which has been one for a thousand years or more. The Welsh Bishops may no longer be summoned to Convocation, or sit in the House of Lords—an arbitrary enactment, for which there is no precedent in history since the violent interference of Cromwellian times with the organisation of the Church. But is it possible to believe that the suggested changes will be for the glory of GOD? Are we not reminded of the inhabitants of the Jewish village in the Gospel story, who, when they saw the LORD JESUS, besought Him to depart out of their coasts?

We ask ourselves—Why is this attack made upon us? Why, when we cannot take up a newspaper without reading of grievous wrong and evil in our midst, crimes of violence, of intemperance, of impurity—why are many of our fellow-Christians ranged with those who are enemies of CHRIST in the desire to cripple our historic Church? Is it because the Church has failed? The very reverse is the case. The Church is the only religious body in Wales which is increasing in numbers. At this moment more marriages are celebrated in Church than in all the other places of worship put together. Does this look like failure? Is it because the Church is doing harm? On the contrary, one leading Nonconformist after the other has testified to the value of her work.

Is the Church a menace to the State? We know this has at times been the case in other countries, but in the present day the Church is always on the side of law and order. Her training makes men patriots as well as Churchmen, and in Britain beyond the seas, as well as in our own island, the clergy are valuable supporters of all that makes for good governance. The primitive ideal which sums up the Gospel is set forth Sunday by Sunday: "Honour all men, love the brotherhood, fear GOD, honour the Ki g." Does the Church use her position to persecute other religious bodies? On the contrary, she recognises the splendid work done by other denominations, and far from seeking to injure them, rejoices in every sign of spiritual progress. Yet it is at this moment, when the right hand of fellowship is held out in the name of our common LORD and Master, that we are wounded in the house of our friends.

We desire to put the most charitable construction on the action of those who worship the same LORD with ourselves; but it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that it is not the Church's failure, but her success, which has singled her out for attack. It is because of the wonderful progress made in Wales during the past forty years, progress which, be it remembered, means that thousands of souls have been won for Christ, that a certain section feels

they must strike now, and strike cruelly, or the position will have become impregnable.

What, then, is our attitude to be in face of this unexampled peril? We must be fair, charitable, moderate, but absolutely loyal to our Church, and firm in our championship of our brethren in Wales. Inspired by the example of the martyrs of old, we must resolve not to be their unworthy descendants; and every Churchwoman among us, the humblest as well as the highest, must realise that she owes it to her day and generation and to the unborn future to do her utmost to avert this disaster.

What can we do practically? First, we must endeavour really to understand the question ourselves. It is for this reason that we are resolved to learn, to discuss, to make the subject our own.

Secondly, when we have learnt ourselves, we must help others to understand. Thousands of people are still in complete ignorance of the evil which is contemplated; therefore they are not taking their part in resisting it, and the danger is that they may wake up too late, to find that one of the greatest forces for good in our beloved country has slipped through their fingers. We can all take our share in forming public opinion. Our own families, our friends, our households, our fellow-workers—here is a wide sphere of operations. We must be ready to answer objections and to clear up mistakes.

Thirdly, we must join in the intercession which is going up already from many a home throughout our country on behalf of our fellow-Church-people in Wales. This is the great strength of our workers. Is anything too hard for the LORD? Even at this eleventh hour He can save the Church from spoliation, but His appointed means are the prayers of His people. "Ye have not because ye ask not."

Victory is His, to give or to withhold. It may be that from this time of bitter trial the Church will emerge purified and vitalised, through the uniting force of a common danger averted—only let each look to it that he

has done his part to the utmost. And, if the sacrifice is great, if the tax on time, strength, funds, seems overwhelming, let us remember that we owe everything, all that makes life worth living, to one of whom it is written, "CHRIST *loved* the Church, and He gave—not a little money, not a little time—but *Himself* for it."

II

The Church in Wales

EARLY HISTORY
HOW IT CAME INTO BEING
WAS IT EVER "ESTABLISHED"?

Prayer

FOR STEADFASTNESS

Almighty and Immortal God, the aid of all that need, the helper of all that flee to Thee for succour, the life of them that believe, and the resurrection of the dead; we beseech Thee for Thine infinite mercies, wash us and sanctify us with the Holy Ghost; that we who have been received into the Ark of Christ's Church, being steadfast in faith, joyful through hope, and rooted in charity, may so pass the waves of this troublesome world that finally we may come to the land of everlasting life, there to reign with Thee, world without end; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

II

Early History of the Church in Wales

THE Church is so much a part of our lives—we are, in a sense, so accustomed to having it in our midst—that we can hardly picture what our country would be like without it; and yet, of course, there was a time when in the villages, up and down our hills and dales, there were clusters of huts for human habitations, but no tower or spire in their midst, pointing the occupants to another and a higher life. In Wales, as in England before the Christian era, our ancestors were Druidical worshippers. But what this means we cannot definitely tell, for Druidism was a secret society, and its mysteries were jealously preserved from all who did not belong to it. We do know, however, that they had altars in the open air, and that they held the oak and the mistletoe specially sacred; also they had sacred groves, and they believed in the existence of a Supreme Being, whom they called "The Unknown," in the immortality of the soul, and in the need of atonement for sin. It is to be feared that this last article of their faith often led them to offer most cruel sacrifices in the shape of human beings to propitiate their god, and the beautiful Island of Anglesea, which was a great centre of the Druids, must have witnessed many a horrible murder committed in the vain hope of washing away the sin of criminals.

About twenty-five years after our Blessed LORD was crucified, the Romans being in possession of Britain, they determined to root out the Druids, not because of their religion, but on account of their dangerous influence over the people in secular matters. There is a stirring account

of how the Druids gathered in large numbers on the seashore in the Island of Anglesea, and, while they watched the Roman soldiers assembling on the opposite side of the Straits, invoked the vengeance of their "Unknown God" upon the invaders. But it was all of no avail, for Paulinus, the General, was determined to get rid of their mischievous influence, as he considered it, once for all, and he ordered them all to be put to the sword, while their altars were demolished and their sacred groves destroyed. That was the last time that a Druid was seen in Britain.

We can picture the grief and desolation of the people, bereft both of their priests and their religion—and yet these very Romans who appeared so cruel were the instruments in GOD'S hands of bringing the True Light to Wales. Whether the first missionaries came from Rome or not is doubtful, but it is certain that the good governance which the Romans introduced, and above all, the splendid roads and bridges they built in the wild and desolate districts in Wales, made it possible for the messengers of the Gospel to penetrate regions which would otherwise have been closed to them for centuries.

It is indeed touching to think of what these devoted men underwent in their desire to bring the Joy of CHRIST to the wild inhabitants of Wales. They took their lives in their hands in more senses than one. They crossed the seas in tiny open boats, in imminent danger of shipwreck, they journeyed, footsore and weary, through desolate wastes and tangled forests, where foes might be lurking at every turn. They hungered and thirsted, with no friendly inn to refresh them. The sun beat down on them remorselessly at noon, while at night too often they lay exposed to cold and rain, and when they reached their destination there was more than a possibility that the inhabitants would take them for enemies. and destroy them before they had time to deliver their message of peace. Yet despite all difficulties, all drawbacks, all perils, they were not to be daunted, and it is to their heroism we owe our knowledge of GOD and our LORD JESUS CHRIST. Their work has endured, but their names

have perished. Truly "the Kingdom of GOD cometh not with observation." As the old Church Historian, Fuller, sums up the situation, "We see the Light of the Word shined here, but see not who kindled it." Yet this we know, that about the year 200 a Church existed in Wales, and that in all probability it was organised by Christians from France. Now, we have recently heard much from those who should know better about the Church in Wales being an alien Church. What do they mean by such an assertion? Do they mean that Christianity first came to Britain from outside? Because if so, the Church was obviously "alien" in every country except Judea. How could our forefathers know about the life and death of our Blessed LORD unless someone came across the sea to tell them the glad tidings? If this makes the Church "alien," then the whole of our civilisation is alien, for we owe the arts of government, and building, and road-making, and many another besides, to the Romans and other nations. Yet because we were taught these matters in the first instance, they are none the less our own.

But what is insinuated by those who use this term is that the Church in Wales was *forced* upon the people, that they never desired it, that it did not appeal to them, and that, in fact, it was rather a hindrance than a help to the spiritual life of the inhabitants. Now, this is a most serious charge, and if it is untrue, those who make it incur a very grave responsibility; for they are persuading the people of the present day to be guilty of the basest of all crimes—ingratitude to those who sacrificed time, money, yes, even life itself, in the distant past for their benefit. Let us see whether there is any proof in Wales itself of how the Welsh regarded the Church. Those of us who have the opportunity should study for themselves on the spot the attitude of the inhabitants throughout the centuries to this Church so wrongly called "alien." They would find in little remote hamlets, as in busy towns, ancient churches reared by the devotion of the worshippers; they would find village after village with a (to us) unpronounce-

able name, beginning with Llan. What does this mean? In England and Scotland we have the same prefix—*Church* Stretton, *Kirk* Langley, *Kirk* Ireton, *Kirk*by, *Kirk*lington, *Kirk* Michael—all testifying to the honour in which the Church was held. But numerous as these are in the rest of the United Kingdom, they are few in comparison with those parishes in Wales which have thus perpetuated their joy at the establishment of a Church in their midst. For this is the meaning of the word—Llan is primarily a fold —and it is usually associated with the name of a saint; "Llanavan," the fold of St. Avan; "Llandaff," the fold of St. Dufrig; "Llangibbi," and hundreds of others. How it takes us back to the beautiful parable of the Shepherd, the fold, and the sheep! Is it possible to believe that the warlike Welsh would ever have thus designated their towns and villages unless they had loved the institution whose name they bear? The truth is self-evident. From the earliest times the Welsh have been a deeply religious, emotional people. They loved their Church and all that it meant to them with passionate devotion—a devotion which showed itself in the determination to bring to heathen portions of England the knowledge of CHRIST. They sent missionaries in very early times over the border of their own domain to bring those who had never heard of the Gospel into the fold. They built churches in district after district to keep the faith alive among themselves, naming them after their own Welsh saints.

It is evident that Church and State worked inseparably for the good of the people from very early times. We read how in the year 926 Howell the Good, a Prince of Wales, wishing to improve the government of his country, summoned to his assistance three Bishops, those of St. David's, Llandaff, and Bangor. At this time, or shortly afterwards, Bishops in Wales were already consecrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury, although Wales and England were not united under one King till 300 years later. Howell the Good and the three Bishops, with other learned men, set out on the long journey to Rome "to consult the wise in what manner to improve the laws of Wales, and to

ascertain the laws of other countries and cities." On his return Howell summoned to Whitland in Carmarthenshire "all the heads of the tribes of the country and their assistants and all the wise and learned, ecclesiastical and lay," and they drew up a code of laws for the governance of the people. But even then they were not satisfied, so they started for Rome once more to make sure that these laws were in accordance with the law of GOD and the laws of countries and cities in receipt of faith and baptism. The journey in those days took many months each way, but evidently they felt no trouble too great to achieve their purpose. And having perfected their code to the best of their ability, they came back to Wales, and submitted the laws to the verdict of the whole country before they became the law of the land.

We find in this code the merciful privilege of sanctuary recognised. Just as in Jewish times cities of refuge were provided for those in peril of their lives, so the Church gave to certain of its sacred buildings the privilege of sanctuary. In these sanctuary churches, as they were called, close to the altar was a stone chair—the chair of peace—and to this chair a fugitive might flee, imploring the mercy of GOD and the justice of His ministers. No one could eject him under pain of the severest penalties, and at a time when even small offences were punished by death such a provision must have been indeed a boon. The Bishop was often called in to mediate, and fine, or restitution in case of theft, were substituted for mutilation or the capital sentence. The Broad Sanctuary in Westminster still preserves its ancient name.

During the wars which continued for centuries between Wales and England before both were united under one Sovereign, much damage was done to the churches. The Cathedral of St. Asaph was practically destroyed, and needed to be rebuilt. Funds were scarce, and it was decided that the Canons should seek to raise money for the structure by exhibiting a famous copy of the Gospels which belonged to the Cathedral. They received authority to do this in the four Welsh Dioceses and in the adjoining Sees

of Hereford, Lichfield, and Coventry, with the result that for nine years they collected annually a sum equal to £1,000 of our money—£9,000 in all—and by 1295 the new cathedral was completed. This is one out of many instances which make it clear that more than six hundred years ago the devotion of the Welsh to their Church was undoubted, and that Welsh and English alike had realised the Apostolic ideal of the sacred Body—"We are members one of another."

The historian of Wales, Giraldus Cambrensis, gives us a graphic picture of the religious life as he saw it in the previous century. He speaks highly of the antiquity and purity of the faith, and describes how the first piece of every loaf is broken for the poor; they ask a blessing of every priest they meet. They pay the great tithe on all their property and cattle. Two-thirds of it goes to their baptismal church, one-third to the Bishop. We shall hear more about this in the next section. Evidently they were generous to their Church, for he specially directs the priest not to ask any fee for the administration of the Sacraments, or for marriages or funerals, but permits him to accept such offerings as the faithful may make of their own free will. The custom of offerings at funerals still prevails in North Wales, and the worshippers, who attend in large numbers, go up one by one to the chancel steps or the altar-rail to present their gift.

The service-book of Bishop Anian, who in 1284 christened the first English Prince of Wales (presented by his father to the turbulent Welsh as a ruler who could not speak a word of English), shows how vital was the Church life in those days, and how it was bound up with the interests of the people. It differs in some respects from the English custom; for instance, the babe in baptism is completely immersed three times, evidently in honour of the Trinity. It contains services for all Sundays and holy days throughout the year; offices for making acolytes, subdeacons, deacons, presbyters, and Bishops; forms for the consecration of churches and churchyards; forms of "adjuring" of bread cheese, and honey; prayers

in times of war, pestilence, and other occasions. These last must have been in perpetual use for many years.

Nor were the Welsh backward when the rescue of the Holy Sepulchre in Palestine from the hands of unbelievers was projected. When the imposing procession of Crusaders passed through Wales from England, many a stalwart young man took the Cross, and joined the heroic expedition to the Holy Land.

Yet through all the centuries down to the end of 1500 they had no Bible in their own tongue to keep them true to the faith. The services were in Latin, and during what are called the Dark Ages, when religion was at a very low ebb, it is wonderful that spiritual life survived. We must not overlook the debt the country owed to the Bards in this respect. They were musicians, poets, and singers, who travelled from place to place, singing at each house. They often composed their own songs, which dealt largely with sacred subjects. They had immense influence with the people and doubtless contributed largely to keeping religion alive when there was little else to do it.

In the sixteenth century the great development which we call the Reformation came to a head. It is often said that at this time a different Church was substituted for the ancient Church of England and Wales. But that is a misstatement. In the parishes up and down our country, the churches, the clergy, the worshippers, and the Creeds remained the same after the Reformation as before. They were still guided and governed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York.

The chief change which was made was this. For centuries a foreign Bishop who was called the Pope had claimed to rule not only the National Church of our land, but also to influence the Government of our country in other respects. This had been a frequent matter of dispute between our Sovereign and the Pope. But even in the days of our bad King John, who gave away many of our liberties, our Church was not called the Roman Church, but in the great charter of British freedom (Magna Charta) it is described as "our Church of England" (*Ecclesia Anglicana nostra*).

In the days of Henry VIII. the claims of the Pope to dictate in England were thrown off once for all, and as the monks who were settled in England and Wales in large numbers under foreign rules had become powerful and wealthy bodies, who supported his authority and would not obey our leaders, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, their monasteries were broken up and their goods seized by the King. In some respects they were very hardly used, and their treatment cannot be defended; but there were many abuses which had to be set right, and though it was done in a wrong way, in the end it was for the good of our Church-people. Once freed from the control of the Pope, the Church proceeded to purify its teaching on lines long advocated by English Churchmen. Certain superstitious practices were abolished, but the greatest improvement of all for Wales was that by the end of the sixteenth century the services could be held in Welsh instead of Latin, as both the Bible and Prayer-Book had been translated. We must remember that only a few people could read, and copies of the Bible were very expensive; so the one opportunity for the majority to hear the Word of God was by going to their parish church These alterations did not make the National Church a *different* Church, any more than the Reform Bill made Parliament a different Parliament. In both cases the same institution went on as before, with many of its blemishes removed.

There was one part of the Reformation which was neither right nor just. King Henry VIII., when he dissolved the monasteries, took many of the tithes and lands which had been given for the service of God and used them for his own purposes. It is calculated that he received a sum equal to about eight millions of our money by the sale of Church lands. This was indeed a great sin. It is strange that any should use it as an argument for Disendowment in the present day. Because a wilful King committed a terrible wrong nearly four hundred years ago, is that a reason why Christians of the twentieth century, with all their opportunities of higher standards and ideals,

should follow his example? Robbery is robbery whether it be perpetrated by King, or Parliament, or private individuals.

Another misstatement which is often made is that this same King who thus despoiled the Church was the person who established the Church of England. Those who make such an assertion cannot have studied the question. The Church in England and Wales existed long before the monarchy, and by its unifying influence our country was welded into one. It would be truer to say that the Church established the State than that the State established the Church. Those who put such an argument forward should be asked to indicate the date of the Act which performed this feat. If the State established the Church in the time of King Henry VIII., we have all the records of these days, and it would be among them. But they cannot produce such an Act, for the best of all reasons—because it never took place.

But they object, "What about the Act of Uniformity? That at any rate was passed by Parliament without consulting the clergy." This Act does exist. What does it mean? It means that when the project of celebrating the services (as we do) in the people's own languages was first suggested, it was found that in different parts of England different forms of public worship were in use. It was thought well that throughout our island the same book should be utilised, so that Churchmen moving from one place to another might find the service to which they were accustomed. These various "uses" were carefully revised in accordance with the Scriptures. The best was taken from each one, thus forming what, with a few subsequent alterations, is the same beautiful Prayer-Book we love to-day. This Act of Uniformity was passed in 1549, and we have exact knowledge of who were responsible; for Princess Mary, afterwards sadly famous for her cruel persecutions of those who differed from her, wrote to her brother King Edward VI. objecting to the Communion Service, and saying "the law made by Parliament was not worthy the name of law." To which the answer received

was, "The fault is great in any subject to disallow a law of the King, a law of the realm, by long study, free disputation, *and uniform determination of the whole clergy*—consulted, debated, and concluded." And in another place the King describes the Prayer-Book as "by the whole clergy agreed, yea, by the Bishops of the realm devised." The same holds good of the alterations made later. So it is clear that Church and State agreed together in bringing order and continuity into the religious life of the people.

The Church was never established by the State, because in early days, as with the Israelites, the two were inseparably blended. Their union has endured, with one short break, for over a thousand years, and that break of some eighteen years under the Commonwealth was so repugnant to the national sense that with the Restoration the Revolutionary legislation was repealed, and the old Church order was joyfully resumed. Drawbacks there may be in such a relation, but they are outweighed a hundredfold by the advantages. It will be an evil day for Britain when religion is fenced off from her national counsels, when the leaders of the spiritual life of the nation are bidden to take their lofty ideals elsewhere, for in the ultimate decision of the future of her citizens there is no room for such considerations. To avert such a disaster we must all combine, remembering that to GOD all things are possible.

In this matter many earnest Nonconformists are with us. We may well conclude with some thoughts of the great Welsh Methodist preacher, John Elias, written in 1833:

"I can truly say that I am far from wishing the downfall and destruction of the Established Church, because I love her success in all that is good. I sincerely love her godly ministers and members, and I do not envy her for her privileges and emoluments. With reference to reform in the Church, I desire to see in her a scriptural and evangelical reform, conducted by some of her learned, godly, and eminent ministers; but I cannot expect anything worthy of the name of reform proceeding from the design and order of unbelievers who are enemies of GOD and the

Church. It is not to be expected that any establishment can be quite perfect as long as it is administered by frail men; still, it is not too much to ask now, Is there any other denomination likely to answer the purpose which every religious party ought to have in view—*i.e.*, the preparation of the soul, by the blessing of the SPIRIT of GOD, for eternity—better than the Church of England?"

At Bala the Association of Methodists in 1834 passed this resolution, which might well be repeated in the present day:

"We cannot do less than grieve at the form of agitation assumed by many in this kingdom at the present time, and at the agitation in respect to changes in matters of Church and State, believing that we, as a religious body, should not interfere in such matters; and we earnestly desire every member of this body to refrain from meddling in such matters as tend to disturb the nation, and also to pray for help to live quietly in all godliness and honesty."

III

Endowments

TITHES

GLEBE

HOW ARE THE STIPENDS OF THE CLERGY PAID?

Collect

O Lord Jesu Christ, who at Thy first coming didst send Thy messenger to prepare Thy way before Thee; Grant that the ministers and stewards of Thy mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready Thy way, by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at Thy second coming to judge the world we may be found an acceptable people in Thy sight, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end.

III

Endowments

THE Church's financial problem must appeal to all practical people, and we need to bring to its consideration special qualities of reverent common sense, for in that which ministers to the spiritual life of the nation no aspect is common or unclean, and we may well lay to heart the Apostolic axiom as regards the charities of the Early Church: "If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own household, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."

Now, this word "endowment" is one which, when used in connection with the Church, has to some minds an evil meaning. It is mentioned with contempt, as though it were positively wrong that religion should be endowed. But what do we mean by the word? It is very important we should be clear on this matter, because it is a stumbling-block to many; and they have been so accustomed to hearing it used as a term of reproach that they never ask if it is deserved. Endowment means that instead of having to provide for the whole of our spiritual needs week by week, month by month, or year by year, we have in many parishes (not in all) land and money and a house left by the generosity and unselfishness of our ancestors, so that the worship of GOD may be perpetually maintained. But is it only religion that is thus endowed? No, in many departments of life the same thing holds good. Think of our great hospitals, our schools, our museums, our libraries, our picture galleries. We owe most of them to those who went before us; many of them are hundreds of years old, and were set up by previous generations, so that we their

descendants might have the same advantages they had enjoyed. It is indeed difficult to say where the endowments for which we are indebted to the past cease. The woods, the gardens, the orchards in which we delight, owe their existence to men who often could not hope ever to enjoy the fruits of their labours; or, again, think of the roads, the bridges, the railways, the streets in our great cities, the parks, even our very homes—all these are legacies to us with which the past has dowered us; and thus "endowment" meets us at every turn.

Therefore the *principle* of endowment is not considered wrong. We never hear of anyone objecting to living in a house because it was built four or five hundred years ago, and had been in the family for all that time. On the contrary, whether we are in wealthy or moderate circumstances, we take a pride in these family possessions, and treasure even chairs and tables and bits of china which have been handed down to us for generations.

Then again, take the present time. Careful parents will do their best to lay up a little store so that they in turn may *endow* their children. They well know the value of a nest-egg, and the difference between the man who must take whatever offers because he has nothing to fall back upon and the man who can afford to take long sights, sacrificing a temporary advantage to permanent, stable gain, because he has sufficient to keep the wolf from the door.

But if it is thus right to endow hospitals, schools, museums, families, cities, institutions of all sorts, *why* should it be held wrong to provide for religion in advance, instead of leaving it to haphazard? For surely it is on this forethought of one generation for succeeding ones that the whole progress of human society depends. If each generation were despoiled of the endowments left it by the foregoing ones, life would be a desert. We may go further than this; not only are religious endowments *not* wrong; on the contrary, it is most selfish of us to think only of our own welfare, and say of the benefits we enjoy, "Never mind, they will last my time," disregarding the interests of those who come after us. We cry shame on

the father who through idleness or extravagance leaves his little ones to starve; it is yet more shameful to overlook the needs of the soul, and not provide to the best of our ability that all human beings shall be fed with the Living Bread.

But some will say, "In primitive times there were no endowments." Surely the reason is self-evident. The early Christians had to live, as we should say, from hand to mouth, for they were a very poor and often persecuted society, and, as we know, "not many rich, not many noble were called." They could not, whatever their wishes, lay up for the future; it was difficult enough to provide for their immediate needs. And yet forethought is enjoined by St. Paul, and his injunction to the Corinthians, when the Church was less than a quarter of a century old, contains the germ of the principle: "The first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store *as* GOD *hath prospered him*, that there be no gatherings when I come." Here we have the root-idea—that a proportion of income should be "laid by in store." Nothing is said about limiting the amount to the needs of the moment; and it is certain that accumulation must have been the rule, otherwise the expense of St. Paul's great missionary journeys could not have been met.

There is another word which is greatly disliked by our Nonconformist friends, and to which they attach a sinister meaning—the word *tithe*. We shall do well to consider briefly how tithes first came into being, and what they are. Tithe means the tenth part. The tithe of a sovereign would be two shillings; the tithe of a brood of chickens would be one out of ten. The tithe of a hundred acres of land would be ten acres. From the days of Abraham the worshippers of the true GOD desired to give a proportion of their possessions to be used in His special service. They recognised that they owed everything to His fatherly love, and to them it seemed a small matter that out of what His bounty had bestowed they should set apart the tenth for Him. We remember Solomon's beautiful words, "For who am I, and what is my people,

that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? For all things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee." These offerings of the tenth were used for everything connected with the maintenance of the temple and of the priests who ministered there. They were used to beautify GOD'S House until it became "the joy of the whole earth," as we read in the Psalms. "For Thy temple's sake at Jerusalem so shall Thy kings bring presents unto Thee." Again and again we have it chronicled that the people *willingly* offered. We can see in our mind's eye this pastoral folk, setting aside the best lamb, the finest fruit, the richest ears of corn, so that they might have something to give not wholly unworthy of the acceptance of the Most High. The story of what happened when Hezekiah revived the worship of the true GOD, three hundred years after Solomon, may well be laid to heart in our own day. We see a whole people combining with their King, vieing with one another in their devotion, and determined to make His praise glorious. From cities and villages, flowed the stream of worshippers to Jerusalem, bringing with them the firstfruits of corn and wine and fruit and sheep and oxen. And it was done with no niggard hand. "The tithe of all things brought they in abundantly. So much was there that we learn "the tithe of holy things which were consecrated to the LORD their GOD" were "laid by heaps," and for four months they continued, till the High Priest and the King met together to consider what should be done with it all, for after the temple ministers had received their portion "that they might be encouraged in the law of the LORD," there was still left "a great store," and this was laid up in the temple for future use, special guardians being appointed to administer it.

Again and again in Holy Writ we are assured that this offering of a due proportion of our worldly goods is acceptable to the Most High. Those who regard it as a sacred duty are singled out for special blessing, those who omit it, or minimise their contribution, are reprobated. The Scriptures are full of the subject from the first

mention in Genesis, down to the burning words of Malachi: "Will a man rob GOD? Yet ye have robbed Me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine House, and prove Me now herewith, saith the LORD of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of Heaven and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And all nations shall call you blessed, for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of Hosts."

If tithes were right under the Jewish dispensation, if national prosperity in material matters was made definitely, dependent on the recognition of GOD'S claim, how much more should this be the case now, when, in addition to all the causes for gratitude of Jewish times, we Christians have the "inestimable benefit" of the precious Life and Death of GOD'S only Son for which to give thanks?

Tithes were considered a natural accompaniment of religious observance, even among heathen nations. We find that the ancient Romans, Greeks, Carthaginians, and others, all paid tithe for the maintenance of the worship of their gods, and when Christianity had brought fresh joy into the spiritual life, the duty of paying tithe became a glorious privilege, as we learn by the jubilant pronouncement of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews. "Here men that die receive tithes, but there He receiveth them of whom it is witnessed that He liveth."

So what more natural, as the Church in Wales and England was built up, than that Christians, reading of this custom in their Bibles, and realising its practical advantages, should have resolved to carry it on, and support their clergy and the Church they loved by setting aside a tenth part of their possessions for the purpose? There are those who say that tithe is a tax. It never has been so—any more than rent is a tax—and it would be just as dishonest not to pay one as not to pay the other. The Bill before us sets up an extraordinary theory. If it passes, all tithes will be paid just the same as before, only the portion of the tithe which has hitherto been given to support religion will be

taken away and handed to County Councils for secular purposes. The tithe which is at present in the hands of laymen will still be theirs ; it is only from the Church it is to be taken away. Where is the fairness of such an arrangement ? If tithe is wrong, abolish it. If it is right, then the Church has the first claim to it.

There is a good instance of the unjustifiable results of this one-sided legislation in the parish of Ruthin, Denbighshire

Over three hundred years ago, in the days of Queen Elizabeth, there lived a person who was worthy of his name, Gabriel Goodman. He desired to provide both for the souls and bodies of his fellow-creatures, so he made a grant of tithe, part of which was to go to the warden of St. Peter's Church, Ruthin, on condition that he lived in the Friary and took spiritual charge of the parishes of Ruthin and Llanrhyd, and the rest was to be used for the maintenance of twelve poor people in the almshouse. Various other benefactors, notably Bishop Goodman, of Gloucester, added to this endowment, with the result that for over three hundred years the Warden has ministered to the souls of the people, and the almshouse has been a refuge for those who needed it. Now, under the Bill, the provision for the almshouse is to continue, but every penny of the stipend for the clergyman is to be taken away, and handed over to the County Council.

Where is the justice of such a proceeding ? Gabriel Goodman had a right to will his money for such purposes as seemed good to him. It has been used for these purposes ever since. It is still needed for the same purposes. Yet it is to be ruthlessly taken away from the service of GOD, and given to secular objects.

It has been said by those who should know better that the tithes which are to be confiscated come out of the pockets of the working classes. There is not a word of truth in this statement, and those who make it cannot be absolved from deliberate misrepresentation,* the fact

* For tithes are now no more paid in kind as in early days, but in money—they fall exclusively on *landowners*. Tenants, artisans, and labourers do not now pay tithes.

being that in this matter of systematic giving for the service of GOD we are woefully behind our forefathers. They took care that everyone should do their share, as is proved by a quaint list of what each parishioner should give at Easter, 1675, in an ancient town of the Peak district of Derbyshire. It is to be remembered that the sums named represent a great deal more than the same value in our money; for in those days a sheep might be purchased for two or three shillings, and a fowl for twopence:

"*Item:* Every person of the age of sixteen pays one penny for his offering; for every horse, 3d.; for a cow, 1d.; for every calf, 1½d.; for every foal, 1d.; for every swarm of bees, 1d.; from every person for his trade, 4d.; from every manservant sixpence, and every maidservant fourpence from their wages."

"*Item:* For every Hen an Egg, and for every Cock two —but if they have no eggs, then the parishioner pays to the Vicar one penny for three hens, and for two duck's eggs one penny, and for every Turkey Egg one penny." These were in addition to the tithes of wool, lamb, lead, pigs, and geese, which were paid in kind, and formed part of the endowment.

From the Chapelry of Beeley to the Vicar of Bakewell, when he serves Beeley Church, the following dues are registered for 1671:

"Offerings: The Master or Mistress, or Dame of a family, each of them ... ... 2d.
Offerings of all other sojourners, servants and children above 16 years old, each are 1d.
His dues for the House, 1d.; Garden, 1d.; Plough 1d. ... ... 3d.
His dues for every Milch Cow, 1d.; Calf, ½d. 1½d.
His dues for a foal. 2d. ... ... 2d.
„ for Geese, if above 6, 1d. if under 15; but if 15, 1½d. ... ... 2½d.
His due for Piggs the like.
„ for every Hen 2 eggs.
Geese if not agreed for to be delivered in Bakewell Churchyard on or about Midsummer-day, and the like for Piggs if they happen."

There is another form of endowment, called "glebe"—that is, land whose rent pays part of the stipend of a clergyman. Land has always been dear to the heart of the Briton. The ambition to own a plot is a most legitimate one, and one, we trust, may be realised for many ere long. But we can understand that when a Welshman or an Englishman gave a piece of land to the parish church, he was not offering an offering to the LORD of that which cost him nothing. He gave it because there was something even dearer to him than the meadows he loved, and that was the service of GOD, and the permanent maintenance of His worship.

We still have the very words of the deeds in which they set their wishes down. Here is one (translated from the Latin) by which William Revel gave to the Church of St. Mary, at Haye, in Breconshire, both land and tithe early in the twelfth century:

"Bernard, by the grace of GOD Bishop of St. David's, to all the faithful of the Holy Church of GOD, greeting and benediction. Let all, both those who are now living, and those who shall hereafter live, know that when we consecrated the Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Haye, William Revel did, by permission of Bernard Newmarch, who was present at the consecration, give and grant as a free gift and endowment of the church itself, fifteen acres of land and two tenements, and all the land attached to those tenements in the high forest land as far as the boundaries of Ewias, and in the coppice and in the low ground. He gave also to the same Church all the tithe of all his estate of Haye in all things, as well as that of the lands of Ivor and Meleniac, and of all things that are held of the lordship of Haye. And that no question may arise in the future respecting the matter, he definitely gave tithe as follows: Of corn, and hay, and poultry, and cattle, and sheep, and pigs, and wool, and cheese, and underwood, and the benevolence of Welshmen, and tolls for right of passage, and plaints. Whoever shall subtract or diminish aught from these, let him be cut off from the communion of GOD and His saints until he come to a better mind. Fare ye well."

For 800 years this trust has endured. Can we doubt

that if in the words of the deed aught is subtracted or diminished, those responsible will have a heavy account to answer?

It is to be remembered that this glebe does not belong to any individual clergyman at all, nor even to the Bishop. It was given specifically to the parish church. Again and again this is brought out in the deeds. "I give to GOD and the Church of St. Peter—" so run the opening words. Yet it is this land, consecrated by the self-sacrifice of our ancestors, which is to be confiscated despite the protests of Church-people.

Then how are the stipends of the clergy paid? Not out of the pockets of the ratepayers, as has been so wrongly alleged; not by the State, as is the case in other countries; not by the labourers or artisans. Those who make such assertions are stating what is contrary to the fact, and has been disproved again and again. They are paid from these two sources, tithe and glebe, both due to the generosity of those who went before us.

But someone will say, What about Queen Anne's Bounty? Does not that provide part of the salary in some cases? Certainly; and this again is the free gift of a good woman who has been dead nearly two hundred years. She found the custom prevailing that out of their scanty incomes, the clergy paid a contribution to the crown in addition to the taxes of ordinary citizens to the State. She thought the arrangement unfair, more especially as the clergy were many of them miserably poor. So she gave it back to the Church to be used for helping the worst-paid parishes. The Church in England and Wales being one, and Wales the poorer of the two, this fund has been of the greatest benefit to the principality. But it has never had anything to do with Parliament. It was the free gift of a generous Queen. That is why it is called her "Bounty." There is yet another sum from Church property in the hands of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, which is used chiefly for the Bishop's stipends, to found new parishes, and to provide curates in necessitous districts.

Thus we realise how the property of the Church grew

up, and we shall see in a later section why it is so needful for the nation to have religious ministrations secured. Endowments are undoubtedly right, because without them we cannot insure continuity, nor provide the clergy with that which is so much emphasised in other departments of life—a minimum wage. This need is recognised by the leading Nonconformist bodies in their own case. They already possess large endowments, and we frequently read of generous bequests on the death of their wealthy adherents —yet they are making strenuous efforts to build up still more substantial funds on which they can rely. We applaud their zeal, and wish them all success in their devoted endeavour. But it is difficult to understand why what is good for the Congregational and Baptist communities should be considered bad for the Church ; why poverty would increase our spirituality, while wealth would minister to theirs ; and, above all, how promoters of the Bill can reconcile it to their consciences to deal such a blow at the Church of their forefathers. Such a question is not to be decided by majorities. We are not to follow the multitude to do evil. It was a majority which led to Calvary.

In any case the question of the future of the Church has never been fairly and squarely before the people of Wales as the sole issue ; and the test of a religious census is absolutely declined. Why should this be if Nonconformity is as strong in Wales as it represents itself to be ? If so, they need not fear the result. To assert their superiority, to take away what Church-people so greatly prize, because they are said to be in a minority, and then to decline the only test which can prove the truth of their statement can only be termed persecution. There have been dark chapters in the history of Nonconformists before. Their treatment of the Quakers and others in Cromwellian days was worthy of the most bigoted fanatics of the previous century. It is our part to stand by our brethren, to support them in their hour of need, to shield them from the soul-fettering shackles of enforced voluntaryism, in a word, to enable them by our prayers, our

sympathy, and our steadfast allegiance to "stand fast in the liberty wherewith CHRIST hath made them free."

Life, without GOD, is death to high endeavour,
Death, without GOD, is lifelessness for ever.
Come Life, come Death—though flesh and spirit sever—
Guard we our Church for aye!

IV

The Cathedrals and Parish Churches

THE PAROCHIAL SYSTEM
THE VOLUNTARY SYSTEM
WHICH IS THE BEST FOR THE NATION?

FOR PERSONAL CONSECRATION

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole Body of the Church is governed and sanctified; Receive our supplications and prayers, which we offer before Thee for all estates of men in Thy Holy Church, that every member of the same, in his vocation and ministry, may truly and godly serve Thee; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

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IV

The Cathedrals and Parish Churches

Let us consider an aspect of Disestablishment and Disendowment which is of far-reaching import—that which concerns our worship. As we lift our eyes to some stately cathedral, we do well to ask ourselves what was in the minds of the men who reared it. Why did they spend infinite thought and pains and time, the best resources of art and loving care on rendering this edifice as perfect as human talent permits? We know well that the very best we have to offer will come pitifully short of the Majesty of the Most High, and yet He deigns to accept this service at the hands of His creatures, and ever since the days of Solomon's temple, so graphically portrayed as "exceeding magnifical," true-hearted devotion has sought to enshrine in stately arch and pillar and aisle something of the aspiration which always falls short of full expression.

This is how our great cathedrals came to be; and perhaps, as we dwell upon the humble beginnings of these centres of Church life in some dioceses, such as St. David's (of which we have recently heard so much), we shall see why the maintenance of our cathedrals and cathedral systems is all important to the spiritual vigour of our nation. There never was a time in the history of our race when our country owed more to organised expressions of ideas than the present. We know how the two jubilees of Queen Victoria, her funeral, the coronations of her son and grandson, have all tended to weld together our mighty Empire, because they were made the opportunity of gathering her scattered sons from the far corners of the earth to take part in the solemn celebration

of an Imperial event. We are all the gainers by such opportunities. To their fulfilment an Imperial capital is essential, such as London affords. What London is to the Empire, that the cathedral is to the diocese. At the best it is the centre from which countless beneficent activities go forth ; at the worst it is an abiding witness to the burning faith of the past, and of the glorious possibilities of the future, which the revival of that faith will afford. Such a revival we have been privileged to see in our own day. Never since medieval times have the cathedrals meant so much in the life of the people as now.

How, then, did the Cathedral of St. David's come to be ? We have to go back to the middle of the sixth century to find a well-born Welshman dwelling in the extreme West of Wales, resolved to spend his life in bringing the knowledge of GOD, not to the heathen in distant lands, but to those surrounding him, his own friends and neighbours. Thus the great work developed in earnest, though Christianity had come to these regions before. But it was David who founded his monastery and church on the very spot now occupied by the cathedral, and though in those early days dioceses were not as clearly defined as they are at present, yet the general lines were the same, and have continued for over 1,300 years. During that time there have been 118 Bishops since St. David, not all worthy followers of the saint, but the great majority adding something to the spiritual life and development of the diocese, till we come to the present Bishop—a Welshman to the core, like his great predecessor—under whose devoted governance religion has flourished, and enthusiasm for the Church is manifested on every side.

When we look back on those beginnings of Christianity, we are amazed that the faith survived, for enemies were numerous, and many a time was the church and town of St. David's attacked by the ruthless Norwegian and Danish pirates. Its position on the sea made it specially liable to assault, and in the tenth and eleventh centuries

the Bishops, Morgenen and Abraham, were violently put to death by the invaders. In 1088, not content with killing the Bishop, the pirates determined to destroy the cathedral, and managed to effect their wicked purpose shortly after the Norman Conquest. We can imagine the feelings of Church-people when they saw their beloved church razed to the ground, and shortly afterwards it is sadly recorded of St. David's (which from the time of Asser, the friend of King Alfred, had been a seat of learning) that "instruction for scholars ceased."

In 1180 the present cathedral was built, and for 700 years has enshrined the prayers and aspirations of faithful worshippers. But even then trouble was not over, for forty years after its erection the massive central tower fell, and much damage was done by a great earthquake a few years later. Still the love of the people for their minster endured, and each disaster resulted in adding to the beauty of the edifice. St. David's was a place of pilgrimage from far and wide, for the sake of the holy man who had founded it, and whose memory is still so deeply revered in Wales. As years went on, two more Bishops of St. David's laid down their lives for the faith. In the time of Edward VI. Bishop Ferrer was imprisoned for Romish tendencies, and one would have thought that when Mary came to the throne, this would have secured his freedom; but, on the contrary, he was then tried for heresy, and the judge, having condemned him to be burnt alive in the streets of his cathedral city, was actually appointed his successor in the bishopric. In the following century Laud, afterwards the great Archbishop of Canterbury, was for six years Bishop of St. David's, and we know how he preferred a shameful death to giving up one iota of the principles of the Church of England. It is surely well for us in these puny times to remind ourselves of the heroism by which our predecessors preserved for us the historic faith, and handed on to us the heritage they received. It will nerve us to see things in their right proportions. We are not called to *lay down* our lives; we are called to *devote* our lives for

the time being in this crisis to holding fast the treasure for those who come after us.

We heard in the first section that the corporation of the cathedral under the Bill would be dissolved. We can look back through at least six centuries and find that the organisation of the diocese was practically the same as it is at present. Through wars, tumults, persecutions, martyrdom, it has endured, and has proved itself truly adapted to carry on the work of GOD. Can it be that we, in a time of peace, shall be so indolent, so indifferent, as to permit such a potent agency for the maintenance of religion to be crippled? And then, as regards the cathedral itself—even the Jew, without the inspiration of the life of our Blessed LORD, thought nothing too good for the service of the Temple; and we can never admit that while we aim increasingly at beauty in our homes, our public buildings, the organisation of historic gatherings—that the beauty of holiness alone should be neglected, that we should offer an offering to the LORD our GOD of that which has cost us nothing.

Those of us who have seen the woeful effect on churches in France of relinquishing the *national* recognition of religion are filled with terror lest a like fate should be in store for our own. Many of the churches, consecrated by the worship of centuries, have been turned to secular uses. You may find a saddler's shop established where once the faithful assembled for the adoration of the Most High, or, as in another case, a Blériot aeroplane occupying the stately Norman aisle; while the apse, where thousands had knelt for the Sacred Feast, is given up to the storage of disused bicycles. These are the things that happen under Disestablishment and Disendowment. Let us be warned before it is too late.

The churches in St. David's Diocese are no less interesting than the cathedral. Many of them were founded long before the present cathedral was built, for each group of worshippers desired to have a House of GOD in their midst. These churches of early days were of four different kinds

1. The great *collegiate churches* where a number of clergy lived together in a sort of community, and went out to take the services in the surrounding villages on Sundays. We have still on record the stipends each one of them was to receive, and the exact diet which should be provided for them at the prior's table; in one case it is specially enacted that the prior shall supply a cup of ale for the vicar after supper, as well as after the midday meal.

2. There were the *parochial churches* with resident clergy, much the same as in our own day.

3. There were a large number of *chapels* in remote hamlets where service might be conducted, but the sacraments could not be administered.

4. There were the *baptismal chapels* where little ones might be received at the font into the great family of the Church, but which otherwise were subject to the same restrictions as the ordinary chapels.

Thus in those early days the Church sought to be all things to all men, that by any means she might gain some. Many of these churches and chapels were very humble in the first instance, and for centuries the comfort of the worshippers was little considered. There were no pews or chairs or stools. The congregation knelt for prayer, and stood during the psalms, the lessons, and the sermon when there was one. The only seat provided for worshippers was the narrow stone bench which still runs along the wall and round the pillars in some of our most ancient churches—hence the old proverb of "The weakest to the wall"—those who were unable to stand or kneel throughout the service having this concession made to their feebleness. The floors, which were sometimes of stone, sometimes of mud, were covered with rushes for the sake of warmth. The rush-bearing in preparation for Easter was a special village festival. The young people brought them from the surrounding swamps in large bundles, and the church was cleansed, alas! for the only time in the year. But the altar where the great mystery of Holy Communion was celebrated was generally dowered, even in the humblest church, with the best the

worshippers could afford. The needlework was exquisite; paten and chalice of silver or gold, when pewter or horn was in common use, and the vestments of the officiating priest, because of the sacred office he held, were models of stitchery and design. The bells, too, as time went on, were freighted with a special message to the people as they rung out across the remote hills and dales, reminding them of a higher life, and the joy and duty of worship. Round many a bell-rim is inscribed the legend, "God save our Church"—a prayer which clarions forth a special appeal at this crisis in our fate.

We are under no misapprehension as to the motive which caused these forefathers of ours to rear these monuments of devotion and faith. With simple directness they place it on record, as in the case of the noble collegiate church and buildings of Abergwili, where the Bishop's palace is now situated. The foundation deed states the object to be "that the parts of Ystrad-Tywy, hitherto places of misery, should be changed into places of spiritual joy."

What the cathedral is to the diocese that the church is to the parish. How did the parochial system grow up? It grew up in direct obedience to our Blessed LORD'S command to preach the Gospel to *every* creature. The wise and holy men who were leaders of religion in our islands realised at an early stage that this could never be insured, unless some one clergyman was made responsible for every acre of the country. And so by degrees the whole land was divided into parishes, which at first were of vast extent, because there were not sufficient clergy to serve them, but as time went on were subdivided and the number of churches multiplied so as to bring the means of grace within reach of the whole population. How deeply the inhabitants of the principality valued the parochial system is proved by their action in the southern portion of St. David's Diocese, where at the end of the twelfth century they broke up the large parishes, made the chapels of ease into independent churches, each with a parish of its own, and built others where none existed, so that part of

the See is consequently better off for churches to this day than the rest.

We know by our own experience that except under the parochial system, those who most need the spiritual uplifting of the faith, the very poor, the indifferent, above all, the hardened sinners, fall through. They are unable or unwilling to provide funds for the maintenance of a minister of religion. JESUS CHRIST came to call *sinners* to repentance; but under the so-called voluntary system, the poorer, the more wretched, the more sinful the people, so much the more difficult is it for a minister to make two ends meet. Again and again Nonconformist ministers are forced to leave the slums, not because they do not desire to preach the Gospel to those who need it most, but on financial grounds. Only recently in one of our great northern towns three Nonconformist chapels in the lowest part of the city had to be given up, the officiating minister migrating to the suburbs, because his flock could not or would not supply him with the bare necessaries of existence. The fate of those chapels was significant. One became a variety-hall, another was taken over by the Roman Catholics, and the third by the Mohammedans. How can we believe for one moment that a system which is unable to avoid such a condition of affairs is the best for the religious life of the people? Even eminent Nonconformists, Dr. Chalmers among the number, have admitted that the parochial system was the right ideal for the fulfilment of our Blessed LORD'S behest.

But, it is objected, the so-called voluntary system is more scriptural. Now we must begin by making sure that we are using the term in an accurate sense. What do we mean by the word "voluntary"? We mean that a gift is made, not because we are obliged, but because we *want* to give it, just as we give our little offering in the collection on Sunday. But was what we gave five or ten years ago any less voluntary than what we gave last Sunday? Yet the same holds good of the funds or the land which now support our clergy. They were the gift of Christian people who, valuing religion themselves, were determined,

if possible, to make sure that those who came after them should always be able to have the ministrations of a clergyman. The fact that these gifts were made hundreds of years ago does not alter their character in the least. We cannot be mistaken, for we have the very deeds drawn up to express their wishes, signed sometimes with their name in crabbed handwriting, sometimes only with a mark, and sealed with their seal. They certainly meant there should be no misunderstanding about their dispositions, for many of the deeds begin : "I —— give unto GOD and the Church of St. Paul," or "These rights and all others I declare clear to CHRIST and St. Peter." And their form of consecration is touchingly explicit : "We do separate and set apart from all unhallowed, ordinary or common uses this piece of land, and do dedicate the same to GOD."

We should be justly indignant if the dying wishes of one dear to us concerning the disposition of his property were disregarded. Have we no duty to those who so devotedly built up our Church in the past ?

In every other region except religion, the day of voluntaryism is on the wane. Education, prevention of disease, even insurance, are no more left to be dealt with fragmentarily, but a plan is devised which shall apply to the whole country, and leave no region unprovided. The tendency is more and more to distrust voluntaryism in the direction of philanthropic or social progress. In a sense the first result of civilisation is to strike at the root of voluntaryism. The welfare of the community is seen to be too grave and too onerous a problem to be left to haphazard methods. Hence ensues intervention by the State and the law. It is strange that in matters of the soul alone it should be held good to leave matters to chance. The evils of piecemeal law are obvious. If murder were a crime in some counties and not in others, murderers would congregate in the districts where they could escape penalties. Piecemeal religion is no less fatal to the interests of the nation. The absence of any resident minister of religion in a given locality cannot but create a centre of unrighteousness.

The voluntary system does not promote plain speaking in the things of the soul. When the stipend of the clergyman depends largely on the offerings of the flock, it is impossible, even with the best of intentions, that he should put altogether out of sight the financial aspect. Offence to the richer members of the congregation may spell penury for his wife and children. We were bidden a short time since by a Cabinet Minister to take example by the cheerful way in which Welsh Nonconformist ministers bear their poverty. We Church-people should be ashamed to lay such a burden on our own clergy. We hold that the labourer is worthy of his hire, that our clergy are set apart for the service of God, and for His service alone. We are not prepared, as other bodies are, to see them compelled to eke out their pittance by becoming commission agents for patent foods and medicines and the like. Recently there have been most pitiful revelations of the straits to which they are reduced ; some of them receiving no more than 15s. or even 10s. a week for their spiritual work. The leading Nonconformist bodies have awoken to the evils of the voluntary system* ; they are doing all in their power to raise up large endowments for themselves. Why should they seek to drag the Church down into the very slough from which they are endeavouring to emerge ?

But this is no question of theory. The Church is at this moment realising by her own experience what the voluntary system means in Canada. With all the contributions of the Endowed Church of England behind her, thousands of our fellow-countrymen, our own brothers and daughters and sons, are beyond the reach of the means of grace. Recently an agent of the Archbishop's Committee for Western Canada off-saddled at a farm where he had not been previously, and the mistress of the house said, "Surely you're a clergyman. I've been here ten years, and you're the first I've ever seen." Shocked by such a revelation, he promised to represent the need of a minister for that district on his return. But she said, "I don't know as

* Dr. Clifford himself testifies : "For want of endowments our chapels are becoming cinematograph theatres."

we'd care about it now. We'd have liked it when we first came out, and so would many others; but now we've forgotten, and we've learnt to do without." He was mounting sadly to renew his journey when she came to a better mind, and running after him, held his stirrup while she said, "Oh, sir! I've been thinking. It's too late for us, but can't you save the children? They know nothing about GOD, and not one has been baptized."

In another district he found a considerable community of English people, with some thirty children in the school; but, after searching the village through, no single copy of the Holy Bible or New Testament could be produced. Not Churchmanship only, but Christianity itself, is sacrificed under the Voluntary system.

Which is best for the nation, a system under which every man, woman, and child, rich or poor, has a right to the help of one specially trained and set apart for the purpose in the things of the soul, or a system which makes the provision of that help largely dependent on what people can give? Is it best to undo the work of the past, to allow the provision made for our souls by the generosity of our forefathers to be diverted into secular channels? Will a University speak peace to the passing soul, and dry the tears of the bereaved? Will a library take the place of our Sacraments and our worship? Or will a museum fortify the young for the battle of life, and build up the character on which England's glory is founded? Surely the words of the seer of old ring in our ears: "What nation is there so great, who hath GOD so nigh unto them as the LORD our GOD is in all things that we call upon Him for? Behold, I have taught you statutes! Keep therefore and do them, for this is your wisdom and understanding in the sight of all the nations which shall hear all these statutes and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and an understanding people.' For what nation is there so great that hath statutes and ordinances so righteous? Only take heed unto yourselves lest ye forget."

John Wesley faced this question and decided it once for all. He believed in the Church and the Parochial system

as being most for the Glory of GOD in England. Here are the noble words in which he binds together Patriotism, Christianity and the Church: "He is a lover of the Church who is a lover of GOD, and consequently of all mankind. Whoever else talks of loving the Church is a cheat. Set a mark upon that man."

Down the ages myriad voices
Herald forth the coming day;
Far and near Thy Church rejoices,
Glorying in Thy sovereign sway—
Deeper, greater, grows the need
With Thy drawing nigh;
Through the clash of thought and creed
Lift us up on high!

V

The Church in Wales

IN RELATION TO—
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
THE MORALITY OF THE NATION
SPIRITUAL LIFE

IS IT THE MOST GROWING RELIGIOUS BODY IN WALES, OR NO?

Prayer

FOR OUR FELLOW-CHURCHMEN IN THE WELSH DIOCESES

O God, the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, we humbly beseech Thee for all sorts and conditions of men that Thou wouldest be pleased to make Thy ways known unto them, Thy saving health unto all nations. More especially we pray for the good Estate of the Catholic Church, that it may be so guided and governed by Thy good Spirit, that all who profess and call themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life. Finally, we commend to Thy fatherly goodness all those who are any ways afflicted or distressed in mind, body, or estate, especially Thy servants, our fellow-Churchmen in Wales, now in distress and peril, and all who are striving to preserve the heritage consecrated to Thy service, that it may please Thee to comfort and relieve them according to their several necessities, giving them patience under their sufferings, and a happy issue out of all their afflictions; and this we beg for Jesus Christ His sake.

V

The Church in Wales

We have considered how the Church in Wales came into being. We have followed her development step by step through many centuries, and now we are to dwell on the manner in which this Church of our fathers has acquitted her trust. We know that growth is always the test of life. The tree which ceases to grow has already begun to die. Neither nations, nor Churches, nor individuals, can remain stationary. They must either go forward or backward, upward or downward; and it is well that the work of each should be put to the test, so that its real tendency may be ascertained.

Growth is not only the test, but also the law of life. "Be fruitful" is the injunction given over and over again in the first book of the Bible, and in the spiritual sphere the same holds good. "If it bear fruit, well; if not, cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?"

And so we may profitably go back through the centuries, and consider in detail what the Church has contributed to religious education, morality, and the spiritual life in Wales. For, after all, these three points are her special charge. The Divine mission of the Church is to go into all the world and make disciples of our Blessed Lord, consecrating the being of each newborn soul from the very outset.

For many hundreds of years not only religious education, but *all* education was in the hands of the Church for the best of reasons. Comparatively few laymen were sufficiently educated to be able to instruct others, and as each grew to manhood, unless he was destined for the

special service of GOD, he was absorbed in the chase, in war, or in agriculture, not from choice, but from necessity. In those days people must hunt their own food or starve; there was no standing army or police force to defend them from their foes, so they must do their own fighting; and unless they grew their own corn, and grapes, and other supplies, they must go without, for there were no means of bringing them from distant lands, as we do at present.

We find the monks training the young in all the arts of life, with the exception of war and the chase. They established themselves often in the wildest parts of the country, and set to work to make paths through the mountains, to build bridges over the swirling torrents, to cultivate the soil, and to bring plenty out of the waste. They formed libraries in days when there were no printed books, and laboriously made copy after copy in writing of those they considered most valuable; and, underlying all the education they imparted, was the desire to bring the children and young people who came to them to the knowledge of GOD. They and the clergy generally realised the binding nature of our LORD'S command, "Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." We know from history that not all monks and priests were good men, nor all nuns holy women. But, admitting this, we should be ungrateful indeed if we overlooked the immense debt of gratitude which we owe to thousands among them, who from generation to generation, by their saintly lives, their self-sacrifice and love for the children of the Church, built up the little ones in our most Holy Faith, and laid the foundation of noble lives.

In those days the teaching was almost exclusively by word of mouth, which must have greatly added to the labour of the teacher; and children were taught their prayers and the Creed in Latin. There is an allusion to this at the end of the Baptismal Service in our own Prayer-Book, when the clergyman enjoins the sponsors to take care the child is brought to the Bishop to be confirmed by him so soon as he can say the Creed, the LORD'S

Prayer, and the Ten Commandments *in the vulgar tongue.* It is difficult for us to understand why Latin should have been thought more acceptable to the Most High than the native language; probably because the difficulties of translation were great. How hard it must have been to teach the young under these circumstances! How much explanation the unfamiliar Latin words must have needed! Yet they persevered, to the great benefit of their country. It was not till 1561 that this was altered. Then the Diocesan Council of St. Asaph agreed upon the following suggestive order for the clergy:

"That every of them have the Catechisme yn the mother tongue in Welshe, red and declared yn ther severall Churches every Sunday with the answer made thereunto accordingly"; and at the same Council a stipend was assigned to "a scholemaster for the teaching of children whereby idellness of youth may be avoyded, and the same kept to learning and brought upp in love and fear of GOD, and knowledge of ther deuties towerd the worlde."

In the days of Edward VI. schools were held in the churches, but this was forbidden shortly afterwards. In his reign a free Grammar School was established in St. Asaph, and in this diocese no less than ten such schools were provided by Churchmen at different periods, in addition to all those in other parts of Wales. Long before elementary education became general, Griffith Jones, a rector of St. David's Diocese, aided by funds supplied by Madam Bevan, instituted in 1730 a system of circulating schools by way of reaching those who lived in the remote parts of the country. A teacher was sent to a group of poor mountain parishes for three months, and revisited them after an interval, when he was working elsewhere. Mr. Jones himself prepared many of the teachers; the great feature of the scheme was religious education on the lines of the Catechism and the Prayer-Book. For parishes where it had been found impossible to establish a permanent school for lack of funds, this system was of untold benefit to the children. Early in the nineteenth century education based on religion was greatly stimulated

by the foundation of the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church. How welcome was the opportunity in Wales is proved by the way the pupils flowed in. St. David's Diocese alone had 8,000 scholars shortly after the Church-schools were set up ; and in 1846 the numbers had risen to over 12,000, as compared with 4,000 children in schools belonging to other denominations.

Meanwhile the Sunday-schools have been an integral part of the work of the Church, and a deep debt of gratitude is owed to the voluntary teachers who, week by week, have sought to instruct the youthful members of the Sacred Body in the things of the soul.

Recently Church schools in Wales have been subjected to a severe ordeal. There has been a deliberate attempt on the part of the County Councils to starve them out by giving lower salaries to their teachers than to those in Council schools, and making unreasonable demands as regards buildings and playgrounds. As an example of the latter, the Swansea Education Authority ceased to maintain a Church school because for each child in average attendance 20 square feet of playground was said to be inadequate, while three Council schools near by had playground areas of 20, 18, and 14 square feet respectively.

In other cases they have refused to heat the schools in bad weather, causing real suffering to children and teachers alike, and they have inflicted serious inconvenience on masters and mistresses by curtailing their salaries and paying them irregularly. This downright persecution is surely a poor return to the Church for her devoted care of the children's interests at a time when, but for her, thousands would have been left ignorant and untamed.

Disendowment would grievously affect the future of the Church schools, for the generous contributions of the faithful which have hitherto maintained the buildings would have perforce to go to supplying an income for the incumbent ; and in too many cases, especially in isolated villages, it would be impossible to find the funds for either. What this means we tremble to think ; for in

the diocese of St. David's religious instruction is prohibited in all Council schools, though the school may be opened with prayer, and a few verses of the Bible *may* be read by the teacher without any comment. We believe that our children have an inalienable right to a faith founded deep and sure on "CHRIST, the sure foundation," and we know that its truths need to be taught day by day, here a little and there a little, carefully, reverently, earnestly, as the most important part of the curriculum. Religion which is only taught on Sunday can never be of the essence of life. To us this is vital; to bring up a child without practical religion is to rob it of its most precious heritage, and no amount of secular knowledge can compensate for the loss. "What shall it profit if a man gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

Elementary and secondary schools do not exhaust the tale of the Church's efforts on behalf of religious education. Training colleges for teachers and for candidates for Holy Orders have contributed greatly to this end, while colleges such as Llandovery and Llampeter assure to their pupils a first-rate education under Church auspices.

Religion and morality are so closely intertwined that the two cannot be dissociated. It is through vital, active religion that the moral sense is developed, by the personal action of GOD the HOLY GHOST. Not until He entered into our first father did man become *a living soul* in the true interpretation of the word. Only life can give life. Morality severed from religion is a machine without a soul; and when the moment of dire temptation comes, the chill defences of morality melt like wax before the fire of passion, and too often a young life is blasted ere it has learnt the remorseless power of evil.

Those who strive to build up character on morality alone are relying on unmortared bricks. In the mighty Empires of Greece and Rome, philosophy was found incapable of safeguarding the sanctity of homes and the virtue of women; and with the failure of worship, national decadence set in.

We dare not shut our eyes to the results in France of

banishing religion from the schools. This has been done effectually. The name of GOD has been expunged from the lesson-books, and in the late Education Minister—M. Paul Bert's—"Moral Catechism," instructors are forbidden to teach that there is a GOD, "because it is certain that there is none." The atheism of some of the manuals is so blatant that parents to whom the books have been brought by their children have burned them out of hand and paid the fines inflicted for declining to allow such pernicious poison to infect their innocent minds. The experience of a few years' irreligion among the children was ghastly in its results. Juvenile crime of the worst and most degraded type increased to such an alarming extent that the head of the police (not himself a Christian) remonstrated with the Government, and urged them to adopt some remedy which would restore the moral sense.

Meanwhile among the middle-classes, hitherto the backbone of French society, divorce is largely on the increase, and the diminishing birth-rate causes such grave anxiety that the desirability of endowing parenthood by grants from the State is being seriously considered.

Have we reason to be disquieted as regards the foundation of home life, holy marriage in Wales? Alas! we have only too good cause. In the early days of Christianity Wales was lamentably behind the Gospel ideal in this respect. The laws of Howell the Good show that in place of the lifelong union, which is the only true Christian marriage "till death us do part," the possibility of breaking this union at the end of seven years or less was contemplated, and elaborate injunctions are laid down for the disposal of the children—the father to keep two-thirds, the eldest and the youngest—the mother one-third. We believe that the indissolubility of holy matrimony lies at the root of national morality, and experience proves that this ideal cannot be maintained unless it be based on religious sanctions. What do we find in Wales? We find that whereas about one-third of the marriages take place in church, and considerably under a third in Nonconformist chapels, that the average number of marriages celebrated *without any*

religious ceremony at all is 6,238. Think what this means. There are nearly 13,000 people every year in Wales who deliberately decide that they will enter on what should be the most sacred human relation without the consecration of GOD's blessing! How can it be expected that a union from which GOD has been purposely excluded can be regarded as other than a mere civil contract, in which the law, having bound the two together, the law can loose them should they desire it? Is it not heart-breaking to contemplate such a lowering of ideals, such a pagan attitude towards a Divine institution, affecting as it does the whole future of the race? For if the parents did not care enough about the Most High to seek His blessing at the commencement of their life together, how can it be expected that they will bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the LORD?

In the face of such a grave situation, every force which will uplift the future parents of the race to a sense of their spiritual responsibility is vitally needed, and among such forces the Church is pre-eminent. It has been felt in some quarters that the question of Disestablishment in Wales was not the concern of such organisations as the Girls' Friendly Society and the Mothers' Union. Those who have held this opinion will do well to meditate on the crushing blow which will be dealt at the ideals for which they exist should the Bill take effect, in addition to removing from a parish in too many cases the one person fitted to lead these associations—the wife of the vicar. What the spiritual life of the nation owes to these two Church societies and to the kindred organisation of the C.E.M.S. it is difficult to overestimate. Between them the Mothers' Union and the G.F.S. have welded together for the upholding of the faith of our Blessed LORD in the practical details of common life, over 40,000 women and girls. The associates and members are drawn from all classes of society, from highest to lowest, and the bond between them grows with every year. They stand for the spiritualising of the most human of relations. They are democratic in the best sense of the

word, for they are founded on the conviction that GOD'S will for womanhood in all ranks of society is a pure maidenhood, a pure wifehood, and a holy motherhood; and this priceless gift they are resolved by every means in their power to preserve for each one of their members.

And what of the witness of the Church in every parish for CHRIST? The mere fact that Sunday by Sunday, often day by day, the bell summons the faithful to the worship of the Most High, and as it peals forth over remote hills and dales, or in crowded colliery districts, the people know that if *they* cannot leave their tasks, yet intercession for them is going up, is a constant reminder that this workaday life is not all, that the spiritual life is within their reach; and that this is deeply appreciated is proved by the record of the Church's work during the past forty years. We dare not boast, we are too sadly conscious of all that yet remains to be done; but we should be ungrateful indeed were we to permit a false humility to minimise our thankful acknowledgment of GOD'S infinite blessing on our efforts. Tried by whatever test we like to apply, whether the number of baptisms, or of confirmations, or of new churches built, or of increase in the staff of clergy to cope with the growing population, or, above all, of those who kneel in humble faith at the sacred feast of Holy Communion, these poor Welsh dioceses show a record which puts many of our wealthy English Sees to shame. The history of the Church in Wales for the past half-century is one of steady, continuous upward growth. During the last eighty years no less than 800 new churches and mission-rooms have been built; the number of resident clergy has been more than doubled; the number of Sunday services has nearly trebled, and wherever Welsh is the most familiar language of the people they are held in that tongue. Confirmations and baptisms show a steady increase, while the Easter communicants, which were 134,000 in 1906, had gone up over 10,000 by 1909. It is impossible with these figures before us to doubt that the Church is deeply rooted in the hearts of the people of

Wales, and that with every year they are drawn closer to the spiritual ideals she represents. It has been asserted by those who should know better that the Church does not appeal to the Celtic temperament. Such people should take the trouble to verify the facts. Whence come the inspiring services and the glorious fervour of the Welsh singing in many a parish church if not from the devoted loyalty of Welsh Church-people?

Is the Church the most growing religious body in Wales or no? Search the year-books of other denominations for the answer. With profound regret we cannot but acknowledge that, despite the great Nonconformist revival of a few years back, they are not gaining but losing adherents. This can only be termed a grievous disaster from the Christian point of view, for every force which makes for righteousness is needed to check the advance of materialism and secularism. But it is necessary at this juncture in the interests of the future of religion to face the facts. The four great denominations—Baptists, Calvinistic Methodists, Congregationalists, Wesleyans — all record a woeful decline in the number of their full members during the three years for which they gave evidence before the Royal Commission, amounting to close upon 30,000 in all; and the *Westminster Gazette*, commenting on the position a few months since, said: "There has occurred a slackening of grip by Nonconformist Churches on the people, which has continued in some cases for the past five years." But for the growing influence of the Church thousands of souls would be "without CHRIST, aliens from the Commonwealth, strangers to the covenant of promise, having no hope, without GOD in the world." Yet it is this very influence which politicians are now seeking to hamper and cripple in every direction. It is for many of the people of Wales—warm-hearted, emotional, devoted—a matter of spiritual life or death, and as such is regarded by them. They appeal to us to stand by them in their hour of fiery trial, by our common Churchmanship, by the inspiration of our faith, by the joy of our communions, and it is impossible that they should plead in vain.

VI

Dismemberment—Disestablishment and Disendowment—Non-Endowment

IRELAND

FRANCE

AMERICA

HAVE THESE COUNTRIES GAINED SPIRITUALLY OR MORALLY?

Prayer

FOR UNITY

O God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Saviour, the Prince of Peace; Give us grace seriously to lay to heart the great dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions. Take away all hatred and prejudice, and whatsoever else may hinder us from godly Union and Concord: that, as there is but one Body, and one Spirit, and one Hope of our Calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all, so we may henceforth be all of one heart, and of one soul, united in one holy bond of Truth and Peace, of Faith and Charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify Thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

VI

The Lessons of Experience

We live in an age when Change has become a fetish, when the gospel of revolt is freely preached by men who profess to follow the footsteps of the Master ; and there is an increasing tendency, if even trivial flaws are discoverable in any institution, to find the remedy rather in destruction than in patient rectification. Now, so long as these methods are applied to material matters we may think them unwise, we may deplore their inexpediency ; but whether we feel it necessary to intervene is a question for individuals to decide according to their own judgment. But when similar methods are applied to the things of the soul—to the maintenance of spiritual life in our midst—the matter is on a higher plane. The life-long enjoyment of privileges secured by the generosity of bygone generations solemnly binds every member of the Church to safeguard these privileges for those who come after him. They are not a possession, but a trust—a trust for which one day he must give account. We are doubly bound, every one of us. For we are not only Church members, but also patriots, and believing as we do that " righteousness exalteth a nation," we realise that the injury to the Church which would result from the projected legislation pales into significance before that which would be inflicted on our beloved country in the lowering of ideals, and the withdrawal of many of her citizens from the uplifting influences of inspired religion.

The change involved in Disestablishment is momentous. There are those in our midst who desire it under the impression that it would give the Church greater freedom ;

but such Churchmen advocate it for the sake of the Church, not for the sake of the nation ; and for those of us to whom patriotism is only second to religion, the marriage of the two through many centuries appears fraught with benefits to both, which can scarcely be over-estimated. In every perfect union is some element of sacrifice, a subordination of non-essentials for the sake of the greater good. "Let us not to the marriage of true minds admit impediment." In this matter, as in the question of forms of government, no alliance can leave both parties as untrammelled as though they were unallied. But it is surely self-evident that the power of a Church to Christianise a State must be incomparably greater if it has a recognised status than if it becomes one of a dozen sectional forms ; even as in monogamous countries the position of the wife is on a different plane from those in which polygamy prevails.

But have we no data to guide us in estimating the effect of disestablishing and disendowing a part of our Church ; of rending the bond between Church and State ? Is the problem a new one ? Are we confronted with conditions which have never been faced before ? Surely before taking such a momentous step as is projected, we do well to study earnestly the effect on national character, national ethics, national ideals, of severance in countries where the experiment has been tried ; if indeed it can be proved that in such countries crime is less, the moral standard higher, and the life of the people purer and higher than in our own England, then—and not till then—may we contemplate with some approach to equanimity the shattering of links hitherto held indissoluble.

It is to be remembered that in all nations there is an extreme section which regards restraints of any kind as inimical to true freedom. Of such, was not the Apostle of Italian emancipation, Mazzini. He was no individualist, sacrificing the good of the community to the selfishness of the unit—"Liberty is not the right to do evil," he boldly avers ; nor Lowell, bred in the traditions of a great republic—statesman, diplomatist, poet. He knows by

experience the dangers of such an attitude ; he realises that only through spiritual restraints can man come to the highest of which he is capable. Here is his dictum :

> "I Freedom dwell with Knowledge; I abide
> With men whom dust of faction cannot blind
> To the slow tracings of the Eternal Mind."

And with these Italian and American patriots let us couple the inspiring pronouncement of our own Wordsworth, a thinker of unusually democratic sympathies, but one who lived too near the horrors of the French Revolution to be guilty of cant on such a subject. His noble sonnet might well have been penned to-day :

> "Ungrateful country if thou e'er forget
> Thy sons who for thy civil rights have bled!
> But these had fallen for profitless regret
> Had not thy Holy Church her champions bred
> And claims from other worlds inspirited
> The star of Liberty to rise! Nor yet
> (Grave this within thy heart!) if spiritual things
> Be lost through apathy, or scorn, or fear,
> Shalt thou thy humbler franchises support,
> However hardly won, or justly dear;
> What came from Heaven, to Heaven by nature clings,
> And if dissevered thence, its course is short."

Liberty in its plentitude can only be experienced by the acceptance of restraints ; and across the noblest lives the paradox which is a truth is writ large, "Whose *service* is perfect freedom."

We hear much talk of a "Free Church"—that is, a Church which, in exchange for elasticity of action and liberty to decide which of those sons she has ordained should be admitted to her highest positions, shall be content to forego the direct spiritualising influence at present exercised over the State. Will the counsels of the nation stand to gain by the withdrawal from the Upper House of the avowed champions of religion? If change there must be, should not those who believe in the Kingdom of GOD seek rather to augment the Forces of the Spirit, not by casting out the leaders of our Church, but rather by calling to their aid the accredited representatives of other

religious bodies who may with them, by every means at their disposal, support all measures for the moral and spiritual uplifting of the people, in contradistinction to the materialism which threatens to degrade our day and generation?

There was surely never a moment in the history of our Empire when the need for the Motherland to be sound at the core was greater. We can hardly overrate the splendour of our destiny if we only have grace to be true to our ideals. But to maintain them it is essential, whether in private or in public, in legislation or in government, to put GOD first, to seek first the Kingdom of GOD and His righteousness, that all these things may be added unto us.

Let us then dispassionately learn from the experience of others, and ascertain whether the divorce of the State from the official recognition of the Divine Sovereignty has promoted the welfare, spiritual and moral, of the nation at large where such official recognition does not exist.

The Irish Church Bill is so often quoted as an argument for the proposals as regards Wales, that it is desirable we should realise the facts. Advocates of Disestablishment point to the sister isle and say, "How can you speak of evil results, when the Church in Ireland has not only survived the change, but is admittedly exercising a deep spiritual influence on her flock?" These advocates forget to take into account that, apparently warned by the survival of the Church in Ireland, the very provisions which enabled her to recover from the blow have been banished from the Welsh Bill. The commutation of vested interests is excluded, and for curates no compensation is provided. But apart from these considerations, experience proves that diminished resources have grievously crippled the activities of the Church. We have only to look at the position of affairs now and in 1871, when the Church was disestablished, to realise the facts. The Act has been in force for just forty years. During that time, while the growth of the Church in Wales has been phenomenal, in Ireland it has woefully decreased. *Then* the number of

clergy was 2,334. *Now* it is 1,535. *Then* in such a diocese as Tuam there were over 10,000 Church-people, now there are under 5,000. And this falling-off is far from balanced by the increase in Ulster. The reason is not far to seek. Since 1871 no less than 151 churches have had to be closed through sheer inability to find stipends for the clergy; and these are chiefly in the rural districts, on lonely hillsides where the influence of an educated home is invaluable. Those, therefore, who aver that Disestablishment and Disendowment are good for the Church, have not studied the facts.

But at any rate, say the advocates again, "Disestablishment will make for religious peace." Has Ireland found it so? In response to this assertion by the Prime Minister, the Archbishop of Dublin, voicing the opinions of the leaders of the Church, writes: "I cannot give my assent to the statement. The spiritual mission of the Irish Church, in my opinion, has *not* been assisted by the removal of prejudices and antipathies. They still remain in strength, and exercise a baneful influence on the social and religious life of the people. In some quarters they have increased rather than diminished."

Has it made for civil peace? Alas! no one who has followed the painful tale of recent years can do otherwise than admit sorrowfully that the cleavage between Roman Catholics and Protestants is undiminished, while crimes of violence are still lamentably frequent.

Has it made for deeper spiritual life? The Bishop of Cork writes, two years ago: "In country districts where the members of the Church are few in number and scattered over a large area, and where we have often had to join three or four parishes in a union and put them under the charge of one clergyman, *there cannot be the same life* as there was in pre-Disestablishment days. In such districts people find it most difficult to make up the amount required to secure a decent income for their clergyman. In my opinion the Church has suffered greatly in small country parishes and poor districts." Sir William Watson supports this view. "In the western districts of Ireland

the result is most distressing. May GOD grant the Church in Wales may never suffer as we have done!"

Has it made for freedom? Mr. Gladstone was challenged on this point in 1873, and what is his reply? "I am bound, if my good friend challenges me to state whether there is not more freedom for religious thought in the Disestablished Church in Ireland, to say I willingly accept the challenge, and declare that *she is less free than she was before*."

The financial position of the Church in Ireland (inadequate though it is to her needs) is opulent in comparison with what is proposed for Wales. And yet Disestablishment has not brought her any of the boons we are so confidently promised. It has provided neither civil nor religious peace, increased spiritual life nor liberty. With this example before us, can we be right to acquiesce in the forfeiture of assured advantages and spoliation of our trust, for the sake of benefits proved to exist only in the imagination of those who advocate them?

The experience of France in the matter of Disestablishment and Disendowment is considerable, for twice within little more than a century have the Churches been called on by the State to relinquish the funds set apart for the maintenance of religion, either in whole or in part. At the Revolution the property of the Church went the way of all other property. But when government once more became stable, so highly did the great Napoleon rate the value of the religious sense to the national character that, under the Concordat, a sum for the stipends of Bishops and clergy was voted annually by the Chamber and administered by a minister of public worship. This applied also to the Protestant pastors, and has continued till quite recently. The salary, it is true, was a pittance, comparing most unfavourably, as among ourselves, with the emolument considered necessary for a deputy. Forty pounds a year was the average, and on this paltry honorarium, supplemented by gifts in kind from the faithful, it was possible for an unmarried clergy to survive. Now this meagre income has been in turn withdrawn, and an

attempt is being made to unite four or five parishes under one priest, that he may have sufficient to keep body and soul together.

What mark has the impoverishment of religion left on the character of French citizens as a whole? Has it helped to build up the qualities which make for national greatness, for patriotism, for expansion? The Franco-German War in 1870 gave a terrible illustration of the depths to which corruption, bribery, self-seeking, may reduce a gallant army where religious ideals have lost their hold on those responsible. Brave men went to certain death by thousands, because a large percentage of each regiment existed only on paper.

Within the last few years the gambling spirit has permeated all classes with its baneful influence. Hard-earned savings are squandered on lotteries in the hope of large returns, even by the peasants; commercial morality has sunk to so low an ebb as seriously to affect business relations with other countries; divorce is increasing to an alarming extent; while the diminishing birth-rate gives cause for grave anxiety.

The banishment of religion from the schools brought, as we have seen, swift retribution in an appalling increase of juvenile crime. Atheism is openly taught, the name of the Deity has been erased from the school-books, and officials fear to allow their boys to sing in the choir or serve at the altar, lest it should cost them their posts. With such proofs before us, is it possible to maintain that the State can afford to do without religion? Why should we expect to escape evils which are deplored by the élite of the French nation if, with our eyes open, we acquiesce in the same retrograde legislation to which these evils owe their origin?

We have so far considered the spiritual and moral effects on the body politic of breaking up the special relation between Church and State which typifies the official recognition by the State of the Sovereignty of the Most High as represented by the National Church. Let us now briefly study the results where there has been no breaking

up of old traditions, but where the Voluntary system has practically prevailed from the outset. For if it were proved that such a system best fulfilled the Christian ideal; if under it the nation grew purer, more unselfish, more spiritual than under a National Church; then indeed it would behove us to reconsider our position, and to be prepared even to sacrifice our traditions, our cherished customs endeared to us by centuries, so as the better to fulfil the behests of our Master.

But is this the case? We may learn by the example of America some salutary lessons. Her experience is specially illuminating because of her kinship with ourselves. We are of the same race, the same language, nurtured in the same traditions, with a common past, which has built up in both countries the same qualities of dogged Anglo-Saxon perseverance, and a moral sense which owes its endurance primarily to ages of religious training. Here, therefore, we may study the voluntary system untrammelled by interference from the State, under the most favourable conditions. For to achieve it, there has been no secularisation of ancient endowments, no spoliation of a religious body for partisan purposes, nothing to leave an indelible stain, an intolerable sense of injustice in its wake. The Churches of America are free, democratic, voluntary. What of her civic and political morality; her family life; the sense of responsibility among the wealthy; above all, the spirituality of the religious bodies to whom she looks for guidance?

We ask the question in no spirit of criticism—we ourselves have too much to deplore on all these heads to sit in judgment on others; but we dare not ignore the writing on the wall, which blazons forth in letters of fire how overwhelmingly the difficulty of maintaining standards is increased where there is no National Church to focus the moral sense of the nation, and to maintain in the midst of a materialising age the pure ideals of primitive Christianity. Churches whose pastors are mainly dependent on the offerings of their flocks cannot fail to be hampered by pecuniary considerations; and it is inevitable that, without

the parochial system, ministry to the poor becomes trebly difficult.

How shall we account for the appalling growth of "graft"—of bribery in civic and political life? What of the colossal trusts which have spelt ruin to thousands; the millionaire extravagance, expressed in freak dinners, squandering in one night a sum which would have dowered several families for years? And side by side with this, the woeful, grinding poverty which is egging on the dreary toilers to revolt? Or, turning to the race, what of the disregard of human life, proved by the high percentage of deaths from violence; the grievous degradation of the family through the laxity of the marriage laws; the lightness with which in a certain section of society this tie, whose sacredness lies at the very foundation of human progress, is assumed and discarded? What of the divorce hotel established in a State where the law is of exceptional laxity—where discontented couples qualify by residence for the right to break the most solemn vows? What of the balls given to celebrate the pronouncement of the decree nisi, to which the élite of society flocks to congratulate the successful petitioner? Or, turning to the Churches, who can do otherwise than deplore the growing sensationalism in the pulpit which competition has engendered in place of the reverent exposition of the Divine ideal?

We may not gloze over these pregnant signs. How shall we account for a state of affairs deplored by the most spiritually minded in all the Churches of America? Is it that character or devotion or ability are less with them than with us? We know that the very reverse is the case, for, to the Anglo-Saxon qualities we possess in common, our American brethren add the special vigour and verve of a younger civilisation, together with a freedom from convention which should tend to greater power. No, the cause is to be sought elsewhere. If so far we have escaped in whole or in part some of the evils from which they are suffering so bitterly, is it not because we possess what they lack—namely, the rallying-point of an historic National Church—whose age-long dignity

enables her to voice the moral sense of the nation, in no uncertain tones, on matters affecting the spiritual and ethical welfare of her citizens? Yet it is this very rallying-point, this witness for the Highest in our midst, which we are asked to cripple for generations to come.

This is no exaggerated expression. An integral part of the scheme proposed is the dismemberment of our historic Church in absolute disregard of the wishes of the great body of Church-people both in England and Wales. Could tyranny go farther? Here is a blessed company of faithful people which believes it can best fulfil its Divine mission for the good of the nation under the same conditions, by the same methods, in the same close union one with another as have existed for centuries. The beneficent influence of this Society is not disputed. Its members are upright, law-abiding, progressive in a singular degree; upholding the institutions which have made England great—yet, against its will, it is to be arbitrarily dismembered.

Do the great Nonconformist bodies who promote this dismemberment believe in dissociating Wales from England in their own case? No; the question of a separate Free Church Council for Wales was debated four years ago, and after exhaustive discussion it was decided that such an arrangement would not be for the religious welfare of the people of Wales. The Wesleyans in Wales and England are controlled by *one* Conference, and there is a "Congregational Union of England and Wales." They believe, as we do, that "Union is Strength."

In their case we hear nothing of offence to the Welsh national spirit, and we of the Church would cry shame on outsiders who sought to dictate to Nonconformists the methods by which they should be governed in matters of religion. Then by what right do they claim to dictate to us? to say, "This and that diocese shall be cut off, whether you will or no; we know better what is good for you than you do yourselves; your methods are unwise; leave it to us, and you will find when we have relieved you of an arm and a leg you will really be stronger than you were before!"

We call upon members of other religious bodies to deal with us as they would have us deal with them. If they value their own methods, no less do we; if they value their traditions—what of ours, rooted in the strength of centuries? Shall the children rise up against the Mother to whom they owe their very life, their Bible, their knowledge of GOD, the guardianship of truths which else had been lost?

Picture the outcry if the treatment proposed for our historic Church were meted out to our fellow-subjects in India—if the measure applied to Mahommedanism or Hinduism! In both cases, leave to worship after their ancient fashion, undisturbed in the possession of funds accumulated through the ages, untrammelled as regards the governance of their adherents, is conceded without question. Why is it to be denied to us?

The value of religious influence to the State is so clearly realised in most European countries that in many cases the stipends of the clergy actually form part of the Annual Budget. Within the limits at disposal, this aspect can only be hinted at, but the point amply repays study, and is dealt with exhaustively in Lord Selborne's valuable work.* The example of Switzerland is specially illuminating, for when, some thirty years ago, "the abrogation of the budget of worship" was decreed by the great Council of Geneva, the minority demanded a referendum, with the result that the project was rejected by overwhelming numbers.

Great opportunities demand great ideals. The due fulfilment of an imperial destiny demands the strengthening in our midst of *every* force which makes for righteousness. Christians of all denominations must combine against the materialism and paganism which threatens the spread of the Divine kingdom. For we see our calling:

"The bugles clarion 'Forward!' we are coming every one,
The muster roll is filling up, the banners are unfurled.
Our ancient ardour kindles as we greet the rising sun
Of an Empire, GOD-commissioned, to regenerate the world."

* "A Defence of the Church of England against Disestablishment and Disendowment."

VII

Disendowment in Wales

WHAT IT MEANS TO WALES—
ARREST
IMPOVERISHMENT
CONFUSION
WHAT IT MEANS TO ENGLAND
WHO BENEFITS BY IT?

Collect

O God, merciful Father, that despisest not the sighing of a contrite heart, nor the desire of such as be sorrowful; Mercifully accept our prayers that we make before Thee in all our troubles and adversities, whensoever they distress us; and graciously hear us, that those evils, which the craft and subtilty of the devil or man worketh against us, may be brought to nought; and by the providence of Thy goodness they may be dispersed; that we Thy servants, being hurt by no persecutions, may evermore give thanks unto Thee in Thy Holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

O Lord, arise, help us, and deliver us for Thine honour.

VII

Disendowment in Wales

THE effect on religion in Wales of confiscating a large proportion of the funds hitherto consecrated to the service of GOD claims careful study. But before entering on this practical aspect it will be well to dwell briefly on the effect of *Disestablishment*, as this is held by some people to be comparatively unimportant. There are those who appear desirous to shut out from the councils of the State those men who are specially set apart and consecrated to GOD for the leadership of His Church. They resent the presence of a selected number of Bishops in the House of Lords, though it is difficult to enter into their point of view, for these same objectors welcome with open arms the presence of Nonconformist ministers in the Lower House. Now as the Law stands at present, the clergy of the Church of England are prohibited from becoming members of the House of Commons, while the Bishops, according to seniority, take it in turn to represent the spiritual point of view in the House of Lords. This has been the custom since the beginning of the Constitution, and should surely not lightly be cast aside.

It is obviously undesirable that a parish priest should be withdrawn from his sacred trust for the greater part of the year, and be thrown into the vortex of political controversy. Such a position would be quite inconsistent with his ordination vow, which places the care of his parish and of the souls of his flock before every other claim. Nonconformists are recognising the deteriorating effect on their denominations of mixing up party politics and religion. But the position as regards the House of Lords is on another footing. That body fulfils quite different functions from the House of Commons. Its duty in the past has been calmly to weigh the measures which come before it; to correct blemishes overlooked

previously ; to bring its ripe experience to bear on schemes which have not been sufficiently matured, and where the considered opinion of the electors had not been taken to refer bills back to the judgment of the people. Its functions and constitution in the future have yet to be defined. No great Power dreams of carrying on constitutional government without the salutary check on haphazard legislation which a second chamber alone can give.

Is it possible that in Christian England we shall decide that the leaders of the Church are to be shut out from the great council of the State ? Should we not in these days of secularisation and materialism seek rather to strengthen the spiritual element in our national life, to lift all the great questions of education, social problems, the well-being of the community at home, of our kin in Greater Britain, and our relations with Foreign Powers, on to a higher plane ? And with this end in view, should we not call to our councils, not Bishops of our own Church alone, but the leaders of all great recognised religious bodies who acknowledge the sovereignty of the Most High, so that together they may strive for higher ideals in every relation of life ? We need in the government of our beloved country not less religion, but more. We need to bring our projects for national welfare to the test of the Divine law ; and who so helpful in such an endeavour as the recognised leaders of the spiritual life of the people ?

Again, Disestablishment means this, that where there is no National Church, the great moments of public life pass without the uplifting influence of religious ceremonial. We can hardly imagine our coronations, our State funerals, and public thanksgivings shorn of the stately ritual customary for centuries. Yet this has already happened in Ireland. The Archbishop of Armagh recently recalled the fact that in 1869 he attended a great religious service and ceremony for the investiture of King Edward, then Prince of Wales, with the Order of St. Patrick, in St. Patrick's National Cathedral. Since Disestablishment, the Order of St. Patrick has become purely secular. Is it no loss to the nation that the splendid old ideals of knightly chivalry should be severed from their religious origin ?

As regards the present scheme, we are told much of the benefits it will bring to the Church and religion generally, as though it were a new experiment. Its promoters appear to forget that should the Bill pass, it will not be the first experience Wales has passed through of the kind, and the results of this experience are not alluded to for obvious reasons. We may well recall a chapter of history too often forgotten by those who advocate the advantages of Disestablishment and Disendowment.

In the year 1643 the Long Parliament "abolished" episcopacy, and Vavaseur Powell was sent down to Wales to evict all clergy who would not swear to root it out, thus breaking their Ordination pledge. In 1650 the "Act for the Propagation and Preaching of the Gospel in Wales" was passed. Powell confesses that all but two or three congregations in Wales adhered to the Church. He brought down 100 dragoons, and Walter Cradock 200 more, to force Presbyterianism upon Wales and turn out all clergy who would not adopt it. It was illegal to use the Prayer-Book even in private, to hold a Christmas service, or to tell people to bring their children to Confirmation. It was malignancy to preach on any part of Psalm lxxix.; and of the profanities, blasphemies, and worse, by which the churches were desecrated, it is too painful to speak.

How loyal the clergy were to their Church is proved by the fact that by 1654 only 127 of the old incumbents remained out of the 975 parishes of Wales; the rest had preferred to be starved out rather than abjure their faith. The Nonconformist Calamy pictures for us the result: "Parliament had set up a few itinerant preachers, who were, for number, incompetent for so great a charge, there being but one to many of these wide parishes; so that the people, having a sermon but once in many weeks, and nothing else in the meantime, were ready to turn Papists or anything else."

Commissioners were appointed to carry out the behests of Parliament. They exacted tithes with great severity, and Dr. Rees describes those who demurred to paying them as "irreligious multitudes." Possibly the reason is not far to seek. For in 1651, Walter Jenkins "exhibited articles"

against the six Commissioners for South Wales, charging them with defrauding the State of £100,000, and they were summarily turned out "for their miscarriages and undue proceedings."

The diocese of St. David's lost permanently the equivalent of £36,000 a year, and what the spiritual destitution of the people must have been is proved by Dr. Erasmus Saunders' account of the position in St. David's sixty years later. He reports that excise officers were better paid than incumbents, and common sailors than curates. "How can they appear in gowns and cassocks when their mean salaries will scarce afford them shoes and stockings?"

May we not take warning by his summary of the inevitable results—pluralism and consequent absenteeism; poorly educated clergy; slovenly, defective, and hurried services. And he urges, "Nor is it reasonable to expect they should be better served while the stipend allowed for the services of them is so small that a poor curate must sometimes serve three or four churches for £10 or £12 a year, and that, perhaps, when they are so many miles distant from each other. Having so little time and so many places to attend on, how precipitately and as if out of breath are they obliged to read the prayers, or to shorten or abridge! And what time have they or their congregation to compose themselves for their devotion while thus forced to a kind of perpetual motion, and, like hasty itinerants, to hurry about from place to place? There is no time fixed for going to church so it be on Sunday, so that the poor man must begin at any time with as many as are at hand, sooner or later, as he can perform his round. He then abruptly huddles over as many prayers as may be in half an hour's time, and returns to his road. fasting; for, however so earnestly his appetite may call for it, it is seldom that he has time for, or that the impropriate's farmer can afford to give him dinner." We are told much of the blessedness of poverty. But can any be found to aver that "huddled prayers" and breathless rushing from one service to another are conducive to reverent worship and the beauty of holiness?

What, then, does this Bill mean to Wales? It means,

first, arrest of the activities of the Church. It means that instead of the minds of our leaders being fixed on possibilities of expansion in every direction, on providing new churches for growing mining and shipping centres, on training up a larger number of ordination candidates to minister to the increased population, they must be hampered on every side with sordid questions of finance. What this burden is for Bishops and Archdeacons and Rural Deans, our Colonies, who have experienced it, can tell us. It is heart-breaking to see opportunity after opportunity go by, and whole communities relapsing into Paganism because it is impossible to find bare subsistence for a clergyman. Yet what else *can* result? For many years to come (should this Bill pass), possibly for generations, all the energy of Welsh Church-people will be concentrated on providing for work already undertaken, for building up funds which shall secure some stipend for a clergyman when the present incumbent dies. Already these stipends are pitiably small, as we have seen. What will they be when of that pittance all but six shillings and eightpence in the pound is taken away?

In one quarter of the parishes in Wales there will be no endowments left at all; in many others a sum which would provide only a few shillings a week. How, under these circumstances, is it possible to attempt to cope with fresh problems? Yet experience proves that unless Church expansion keeps pace in some degree with population, secularism and materialism increase to an alarming extent. All the Nonconformist bodies put together have not the resources to cover the ground, and plague-spots rapidly arise which prove a source of infection to a wide circle. It is strange indeed that at the very time when superhuman efforts are being made at the public expense to guard our citizens from *physical* disease—hospitals are provided, medical benefits are conferred, patients are isolated, sanatoriums established, that the health of the nation may be improved—a Bill should be evolved which will gravely diminish the doctors of the soul, while it indefinitely multiplies the risk of moral infection. For if, as is now universally recognised, it is of

paramount importance to take preventive measures in the case of epidemics, to safeguard our citizens by removing the causes of disease, tainted water, unsanitary conditions, and the like, how much more should this principle rule in the things of the soul! We know how terribly insidious is the influence of evil, how one after the other may be corrupted by a single criminal, and yet we are asked to weaken the very forces which on the spiritual side are doing the work of sanitary inspectors, doctors, and nurses on the physical side—at this moment when unrest, class-hatred, moral decadence, and selfishness of all kinds are assuming proportions which give all thinking people pause.

It is as though in face of an outbreak of smallpox or plague, the Government were to decree that some of the hospitals should be closed, and the nurses and doctors dispensed with.

The impoverishment of the clergy and the Church cannot but re-act disastrously on the wage-earners. Hitherto in many villages the custom of the Vicar and his family has brought to their poorer neighbours many a little added luxury. A market at their door is everything to those in isolated spots, eliminating, as it does, middle-men's profits and cost of transit. And what of the alms which have been so freely given by those who could too often ill afford it? Now in many an instance this must cease. Provision for those of his own household, even on the most modest scale, will for the vicar of the future absorb every penny. What will take its place? Are the self-respecting poor to bare their carefully shielded want to the eyes of public bodies, with all that must be entailed in the way of inspection and inquisition if imposture is to be detected? So often the wise and judicious sympathy of one who lives among them may afford just the help that is needed in some heart-breaking crisis—help which, given by a loving friend, leaves no sting behind. Why are these possibilities of redressing the adverse balance of circumstance to be withdrawn from those who need it most? Of what use will a national museum or a library in one of the big towns be to these dwellers on remote hillsides?

It is on them the loss will fall most heavily, for they will be bereft not only of the spiritual privileges they deeply value, but also of a counseller and of a centre of refinement and education in their midst which they can ill spare. The disastrous result on such organisations as the Mothers' Union and Girls' Friendly Society, to which the womanhood of Wales owes so much, can hardly be overrated; for in many parishes the only possible associate is the vicar's wife, and if she is withdrawn the work will languish and lapse for want of leadership.

The confusion created by the Bill in all Church organisations is incalculable. It is hard to say whether the parish, the rural deanery, or the diocese would suffer most. The structure which has been painfully reared century by century is to become a prey to sacrilegious hands, who, pulling down a brick here, a buttress there, an arch, a pillar, calmly aver that the stability of the whole will not suffer. We are anxious to avoid every semblance of want of charity. But the fact that the whole of the Diocesan funds are to be confiscated points to a desire to repeat the tactics of 1642, and once more (so far as the State can do it) to "abolish episcopacy." How can believers in the Pauline ideals for the Early Church reconcile this with their consciences? The Bishops then, as now, were found essential to the good government of the Church.

But confusion does not end with Wales. What is to be the relation of the four Welsh dioceses to the Province of Canterbury? Why are their clergy to be placed on a different footing from those of the rest of the province, and their Bishops turned out of the House of Lords? At present all four are called to the Council of the State. How can their exclusion possibly minister in any respect to the welfare of Wales?

So far we have considered what the Bill means to Wales. What does it mean to England? First, dismemberment of the historic Church, interference with Convocation, with the jurisdiction of the Primate, and with the general governance of an age-long institution. Four of her poorest dioceses, including one English county, are to be violently wrenched from her against the wishes of Church-

people in England and Wales. But it means more than this. Have we considered who is to make up the sum of £180,000 a year which the Church will ultimately lose? The Welsh are already contributing most generously to supplement the quite inadequate endowments. For the majority are wage-earners, who, whatever their devotion, can do little more than at present. Then what is to be our attitude?

Can we possibly desert our fellow-Churchmen? Can we look on unmoved while parish after parish is deprived of the means of grace and sinks back into Paganism? or while one devoted clergyman after another faints and falls in the unequal fight? Shall we not rather, in order to make up this £180,000 a year, be forced to postpone indefinitely all our own projects of expansion, Church extension, the raising of the stipends of our clergy, the training of candidates for holy orders? And for the great Missionary Societies who see before them at this moment open doors in every direction—in India, in China, in South Africa, in Canada—must not their urgent claims yield to the overwhelming necessities of persecuted Wales, lest, in our desire to convert black heathendom, we connive at the assured creation of what is even worse—white heathendom in our very midst?

The Bill means for the Church in England dismemberment, paralysis of development, disruption of beneficent activities in every direction. But that is not all—it has been clearly stated that this Bill before us is only a foretaste of what we may ourselves expect in due course. Once tamper with endowments, and the principle is conceded.

Who benefits by it?

Does the Church, or the clergyman, or the parish? No! all three stand to lose in activity, in development; above all, in the knowledge of GOD, in ability to spread the Kingdom of our Blessed LORD, JESUS CHRIST.

Then does national character gain by it? No! We have seen that character, to stand in the hour of temptation, must be founded deep and strong on vital religion. Do the tithe-payers gain by it? No! for tithe will still have to be paid as heretofore, to the County Council instead of

the Church. Possibly experience may once more repeat itself, and in place of the lenient consideration of a neighbour, the tithe-payers may find themselves face to face, as in Cromwellian times, with the "unexampled severity" of public officials. Do the Nonconformists benefit by it? No! the pitiable salaries of their ministers will not be increased by a single shilling.

Who, then, stands to gain? Volumes may be added to a national library, specimens to a national museum, out of the confiscated funds. But the real gainers, by the weakening of the forces which make for righteousness, will be materialism and secularism, the gaunt spectres, forerunners of national decadence, which already stalk unashamed in our midst.

Vice, sin, class hatred strain at the leash. For many, alas! the underlying motive is a mean desire "to level all and leave an equal baseness," and, to quote a leading Nonconformist, in face of this peril, "it would be a disaster to the whole of religion if any denomination were crippled in its resources."

It is because we believe as a bed-rock fact, not as a mere pious opinion, that "to be carnally minded is *death*"—death here and now—and that "to be spiritually minded is *life* and peace," not in a far distant future, but every moment of our existence—that we can never consent to this wondrous gift being withheld from those who need it most. It has been well said that you cannot make a nation sober by Act of Parliament; but you can, and may, take away from thousands of the poor and unlearned an opportunity to which they are as fully entitled as the highest in the land, by an ill-judged and ill-considered measure; and for the sake of the past, the present, the inspiring future, for our homes, our Church; yes, and for those Nonconformists whom we pray GOD may bring out of error to the Light of His truth, we must guard if need be to the death the heritage committed to our trust. The eyes of the whole civilised world are upon us. Let not the legend across our generation be: "Tekel: Weighed in the balance, found wanting." We *can* do all things through CHRIST which strengtheneth us!

VIII

The Duty of Church-people in this Crisis

WHAT *CAN* WE DO?
WHAT *WILL* WE DO?

Prayer

O Almighty God, *who hast knit together Thine elect in one communion and fellowship, in the mystical Body of Thy* Son Christ *our* Lord; *Grant us grace so to follow Thy blessed Saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those unspeakable joys, which Thou hast prepared for them that unfeignedly love Thee. O* God, *of whose only gift it cometh, that Thy faithful people do unto Thee true and laudable service; Grant, we beseech Thee, that we may so faithfully serve Thee in this life, that we fail not finally to attain Thy heavenly promises; through the merits of* Jesus Christ *our* Lord.

VIII

The Duty of Church-people in this Crisis

Obedience to the call of duty has ever been a distinguishing feature of our national character. It has stood in the history of our country and our race for many a lofty ideal, and, prosaic as the word sounds, it has embodied heroic qualities worthy possibly of a greater name. We remember how at Waterloo the British infantry were posted on the ridge in reserve. They were an all too easy mark for the enemy's cannon, and one battalion in particular suffered severely. Time after time the guns mowed great gaps in their ranks. Time after time the brave men closed up, taking the place of their dead comrades. At last even the Iron Duke thought they must give way, but as he sorrowfully scanned their diminished numbers, suddenly a cry went up from these heroes, as the cannon spoke once more : " Never mind, sir ; we know our duty !" And so they went to their deaths, but British steadfastness won the day, and broke the power of one of the greatest generals the world has ever seen, delivering Europe from an unbearable tyranny.

Every day of our lives we have instances before us of what this devotion to duty may accomplish. We find it in all classes, from the highest to the lowest ; in palace, hall, public office, vicarage, workshop, cottage home, dwell those who, year in and year out, without ostentation, are trying quietly and earnestly to fulfil God's purpose for husband and children and friends, and for the wider

circle, not only of their fellow-Church-people and fellow-Christians, but also of those who need them most, because for them the Gospel of our LORD is a sealed book. It is on such duteous pursuit of humble responsibilities, often unrecognised by the world, that our national character is built up. So true are Keble's lines:

> "Oft in life's stillest shade reclining,
> In desolation unrepining,
> Without a hope on earth to find
> A mirror in our answering mind;
> Meek souls there are who little deem
> Their daily strife an Angel's theme."

But there are times when from every member of the Church, however narrow their circumstances, however lowly their opportunities, something more than this strenuous attention to the details of domesticity is required. Some of us are in the position of one who elaborately stamps out sparks on the hearth-rug when all the time the house is on fire. It is useless to take the line that that is not our business, and someone else must put it out. When the children's lives are in jeopardy, no sensible mother will shelter herself behind such an excuse. She knows that it is her responsibility to save her children in overwhelming danger, even more than in the trivial accidents of everyday life, and in nine cases out of ten she rises to the emergency nobly. But when the danger is not physical, but spiritual, when it threatens, not the bodies of our citizens, but their souls, then it is more difficult for the average woman to realise that her time has come, that she is called to the colours, and if she is to be true to the trust committed equally to every member of the Church, she must postpone for the moment non-essentials in order to do her share in an unexampled crisis.

It must never be forgotten that the commission in the Upper Room, "Preach the Gospel to every creature," was given to women as well as men, and that our Church makes no distinction between sons and daughters, but lays on both alike the inspiring pledge, "*manfully* to fight

under Christ's banner against sin, the world, and the devil."

There is a juncture when failure to recognise a crisis is criminal. Before such a crisis as is indicated by the burning words of the poet we now stand :

"Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide,
In the strife of truth with falsehood, for the good or evil side.
Some great cause Heaven's new Messiah, echoing each the bloom or blight,
Parts the goats upon the left hand, from the sheep upon the right;
And the choice goes by for ever 'twixt that darkness and that light."

It lies with us whether we preserve for posterity the glorious heritage handed down to us by our ancestors or whether we are so absorbed in the thousand and one claims of the moment that, through supineness, indolence, indifference, the decision goes by default.

We have made a step in the right direction by concentrating our thoughts on the various aspects of Disestablishment and Disendowment, for it is of the greatest importance that we should understand the question ourselves in the first instance. By so doing we have fulfilled the first part of our duty, which is to reverence the past and appreciate all that those who have gone before did and suffered that the worship of GOD might be handed on to us. But this knowledge we have acquired carries with it special responsibility. That which we have made our own we are bound to pass on to others who are at present in ignorance or, worse still, misinformed.

There are those who meet such a suggestion with the selfish rejoinder, "Why should I trouble about this Bill? It does not touch us in England; it will be time enough to bestir myself when *we* are attacked." Such an attitude would be absolutely unworthy of anyone enlisted under the banner of the Church, and utterly foreign to the teaching of our Blessed LORD and of His Apostles. "Am I my brother's keeper?" was the cry of the first murderer. The Gospel ideal handed down through wellnigh two

thousand years is this: The weaker members are the special care of the strong; the sorrows of one are the sorrows of all, even as the joys of one are the joys of all. "Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it, or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it." Now is the time to prove that our Churchmanship, our membership of the Body, is not a visionary pretence, but a living, breathing reality; that because of CHRIST our Head, those who seek to oppress and injure our weaker brethren must reckon with us. We will not be dissociated from them: their cause is our cause, their griefs are our griefs, their peril is our peril. We are bound to them by the indissoluble links of centuries. We have struggled and endured together in the past; we have earnestly contended for the faith once delivered unto the saints, that it may be handed on unimpaired to future generations through the unbroken line of ministers and stewards of the mysteries, duly consecrated for this special purpose. Ay, and in GOD'S own good time we will conquer together, for

> "We are not divided,
> All one body we,
> One in faith and doctrine,
> One in charity."

In this matter there is no room for compromise. We cannot give away what is not ours, but GOD'S. We of this generation are only trustees for those who come after us. Shall we be less faithful than those who went before? For them loyalty meant often the sacrifice of all that men hold most dear—goods and worldly advancement, even life itself. But did they flinch? No. They thought of us, their descendants. They believed their cause was sacred, and in their hour of trial the voice of the Master rang in their ears: "*Blessed* are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake. *Blessed* are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in Heaven." Now

our time is come—to endure hardness as good soldiers of JESUS CHRIST. The clergy and the Church in Wales generally have experienced the very trials prophesied by our LORD. The campaign of slander, vituperation, and misrepresentation in the Welsh press has been unexampled. No accusation has been too vile, no imputation too gross, to be levelled at men whose only crime was (as even the more fair-minded among their enemies have been forced to admit) that they were staunch to their Bishops, their Church and their parishioners, and the faith in which they believe. And how have they stood the test? They have resolved that the purity of their cause should not be sullied by reprisals; they have not met railing with railing, but have humbly striven to follow in the steps of Him "who when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, threatened not, but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously."

Could any one of us be so craven as to desert such men as these? Nay, more; could we in England be content to enjoy Sunday by Sunday, day by day, all the ministrations we so dearly prize—our services, our addresses, above all, our Communions, knowing that in too many cases our fellow-Churchmen were deprived of privileges to which they are as fully entitled as ourselves? Would not the stern reproach of the Most High pierce through the moments of our most sacred uplifting: "Where is Abel, thy brother?"

Obviously, we cannot be deaf to their appeal. Then what *can* we do to help? There are those among us who, like Naaman of old, might rise to some supreme effort; but the humble agency of the River Jordan seems so much beneath the dignity of the occasion that they turn away in contempt from the means suggested. These are the natures who, when the country is in peril through some great war, heroically volunteer for the front, where they are not needed, but decline to pick lint for the wounded or assist in equipping a field hospital.

There are others who take the opposite line, and shelter themselves behind the unimportance of their position.

They say in effect, "I am not a person of influence. I keep myself to myself. Besides, I have already as much to do as I can possibly accomplish. I pray thee have me excused."

There is a third class which, though taking advantage of all that the Church can offer at the crucial moments of life—received into her loving arms at baptism, strengthened by the special gifts of confirmation, consecrated in the most human of relations at marriage, relying on the ministrations of her ministers both for themselves and for those dear to them—is content to leave on others the whole responsibility of meeting the present emergency.

Could ingratitude go farther? The Church of our fathers—that Church to which they profess to belong—is threatened with a loss which must grievously impair her opportunities of influence for generations, their fellow-Churchmen are sore beset, and appeal for their help; but they are buying and selling, dancing and dining, entertaining and being entertained, absolutely regardless of the disaster impending—a disaster which, should it be consummated through their supineness, will assuredly lie at their doors.

Contrast with the attitude of these triflers and laggards that of the great band of Church-people, who, realising the overwhelming urgency of the need, and the vital issues at stake, are postponing for the moment all other claims to safeguard the precious heritage committed to them. Note the efforts made by those with few advantages, few opportunities, to whom anything like publicity is abhorrent, who out of their poverty give money, out of their busy lives make time—sacrificing quiet, leisure, even health, that they may not be traitors to their sacred trust!

What is their object? It is this—that so far as in them lies the issue shall not go by default. They realise that *the* great danger is the appalling ignorance on the whole subject of the Church which still prevails. This ignorance is at the bottom of the phenomenal apathy in certain quarters; for once ignorance is dispelled, apathy vanishes. Misstatements—to call them by no harsher name—are

being circulated in every direction. Too many educated Church-people are not even aware how false they are; and they frequently acquiesce in some statement which is absolutely contrary to fact. Yet knowledge is available, and it is their bounden duty to know. Have we anything but contempt for the woman who stands calmly by while some scandalous tale is recounted about her dearest friend, and does not indignantly deny it! Yet this is precisely what is done over and over again by so-called Church-people as regards their Church. They cannot repudiate falsehood because they are wilfully ignorant. When knowledge is within reach ignorance is a crime.

How can this state of affairs be remedied? First, by every member of the Church rising to a sense of *personal* responsibility in the matter. Now is the time to be true to our baptismal vow, which was not that we would expect someone else—the Bishop, or the vicar, or the president of the Church committee—manfully to fight and to continue CHRIST'S faithful soldier and servant till the end of life, but that we would do so *ourselves*. "Pay that which thou hast vowed! Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay."

Secondly, having realised our responsibility, we must first thoroughly inform ourselves by reading, attending courses of addresses, discussion meetings, and the like, and then we must, in Emerson's words, "Beware of too much good staying in our hand," and pass on to those with fewer opportunities what we have ourselves acquired. We must think over our circle of acquaintance, and consider what the best method would be of reaching each one. We must ascertain what others are doing, and support their efforts. If no meetings are being held, we must not fold our hands and say it is someone else's business; we must consult with others and take action. There are few parishes, for instance, where, if some of the Church-workers went to the vicar and begged him to give them the course of eight addresses for which the syllabus may be had from the Central Church Committee—so that they might in turn teach others—it would be refused.

A course for working-class mothers is most important. Experience proves that the subject is one which interests them profoundly. Often their husbands and sons, who, after all, will eventually decide this momentous question, have neither leisure nor inclination to go to the root of the matter; but the women *will* do so, and will pass their knowledge on. There is still an immense field to be covered in this direction. In many parishes nothing has been done to enlighten the uneducated womanhood as regards the future of the Church; yet it is on them and on their children that the blow to religion would tell most disastrously.

Tradesmen's wives and domestic servants must not be overlooked. Special gatherings arranged for hours when their duties permit them to attend are warmly appreciated, and during the summer, garden meetings for all classes are found most helpful. There should also be a systematic distribution of leaflets from house to house, organised by the Secretary of the Central Church Committee in the parish, if it exists, or if not a special committee should be formed for this purpose, and also to further the arrangement of meetings and the signing of petitions. But above all we must be instant in prayer. Already from many a home the daily intercession (of which copies may be had from the Central Church Committee) is going up, and workers in district after district have proved that "effectual, fervent prayer availeth much." Invalids, busy working mothers, the aged, can, and do, strengthen the hands of their more active fellows immeasurably by this means. But "let him ask *in faith*, nothing wavering."

Here is what we *can* do. What are we *prepared* to do? It is the opportunity of our lives. Not to every generation comes the chance of heroic action. So long as our cherished heritage was safe, our part was to go on humbly, perseveringly, obediently, fulfilling our daily duties, keeping our Sundays, faithful to our worship, our Church, our Communions. Now the inspiring call has come to stand for what we know to be right, to be loyal to our persecuted

fellow-Churchmen in Wales, to save our beloved country from an indelible stain—ay, and to restrain Christians of other religious bodies from committing a grievous wrong.

How shall we respond? What is our attitude to be? Our cause is a great, a just, a holy one. Let us beware lest we permit it to be smirched by one unworthy action, one uncharitable word of ours. Let us be patient under provocation, calm in debate, persuasive, tolerant, willing to credit those who differ from us with such justification as we may. But while we strive to be temperate and moderate in every respect, none the less shall we be absolutely inflexible as regards our trust. With this there is no paltering. No specious arguments about spoliation in the past must weigh with us. Because a colossal wrong was committed several hundred years ago, from which many a parish has suffered ever since, that does not justify a yet greater wrong being perpetrated by those who have had nearly four centuries more of Christianity to teach them what is right. We dare not betray the interests of those who come after us. And if it means persecution such as some of those who stand firm have already experienced, then "if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but glorify GOD on this behalf."

The eyes of Christendom are upon us. By our steadfastness in this hour of bitter trial, many a one in far-away lands will be strengthened to endure when his own time comes. Nay, more; the great host of those who have gone before, who wrestled and agonised and counted their lives well lost for the preservation of the faith, watches over our struggle. We are compassed about by a great cloud of witnesses. How can we faint or be discouraged while down the ages rings the triumphant assurance, the pæan of victory, of unity, embodied in our creed and theirs—the outcome of devotion to our Blessed LORD, of determination that in all things He should have the pre-eminence, "I believe in the Communion of saints, the Holy Catholic Church!"

Strong in faith—joyful through hope—rooted in charity

—find out God's will for *you* in this matter, and then go forth to do it!

"Radiant with ardour Divine,
Beacons of hope, ye appear!
Languor is not in your heart!
Weakness is not in your word!
Weariness not on your brow!
Ye move through the ranks, recall
The stragglers, refresh the outworn,
Praise, re-inspire the brave!
Order, courage return,
Eyes rekindling, and prayers
Follow your steps as you go!
Ye fill up the gaps in our files,
Strengthen the wavering line,
Stablish, continue our march;
On to the bound of the waste,
On to the City of God!"

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